

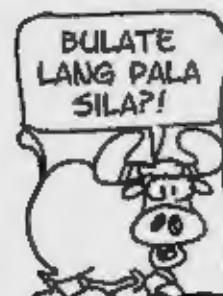
METRO/A23

168 Mall in Binondo raided over tenants' failure to show receipts

Miriam to AFP: You're like worms, stay in your holes

By Philip C. Tubeza

MUCH MAY BE MADE OF the Armed Forces' touted neutral stance, but not everyone in the administration fold is sold on the idea that it is the military "holding the nation together." Administration Sen. MIRIAM A6


LIFESTYLE/EI
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WORLD/A25

Protests prompt Thaksin to ponder retirement soon

ENTERTAINMENT/A2-1

Blame it on bossa nova: Sergio Mendes here for 1-night gig, explains stunning 5-decade career

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, March 17, 2006

★ 7 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 99 P1B

website: www.inq7.net

PUTTING UP A "ROGUES' GALLERY" OF PURPORTED COUP PLOTTERS WILL VIOLATE THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND IMPOSE A "CHILLING EFFECT" ON ALL CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT, CONSTITUTIONALIST FR. JOSQUIL BERNAS AND THE CONCERNED LAWYERS FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES (CLCL) SAID YESTERDAY.

Rogues' gallery hit: Violation of presumption of innocence

By Armand N. Nocum

THE CLCL ALSO SAID THE PLANNED ROGUES' GALLERY WILL VIOLATE THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND IMPOSE A "CHILLING EFFECT" ON ALL CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT, CONSTITUTIONALIST FR. JOSQUIL BERNAS AND THE CONCERNED LAWYERS FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES (CLCL) SAID YESTERDAY.

The CLCL also said the planned rogues'

ROGUES/A8

US tells Erap, JV, Ping: We bugged you

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE UNITED STATES, SMARTING from an unprecedented spying scandal in the White House allegedly involving Filipino-American Leandro Aragoncillo, had bugged former President Joseph Estrada and his son, Mayor Joseph Victor (JV) Ejercito of San Juan, official sources said.

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the case, said Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson had also been subjected to wiretapping.

The US Embassy sent a diplomatic note dated Feb. 1 to the Department of Foreign Affairs, transmitting "legal Notices of Interception of wire and/or

electronic communications for Joseph Estrada and JV Ejercito."

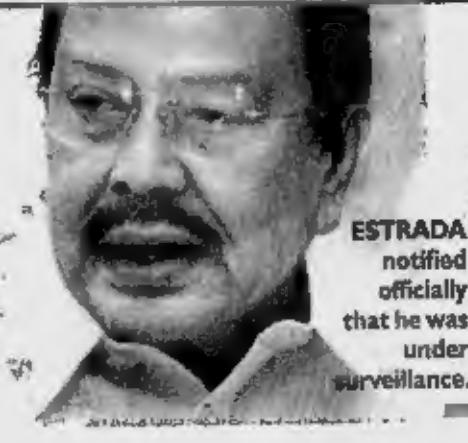
"The embassy requests assistance from the (DFA) in serving the notices on these individuals. The embassy also requests confirmation that the Department has been able to do this," the note said.

A copy of the note was given to the Inquirer by one official source. The Inqui-

er was allowed to read the legal notices dated Dec. 16, 2005. The sources said the Department of Justice served the notices to the parties three weeks ago.

The sources said that the notices were intended to alert the recipients that they could be implicated in the spying controversy and could be brought to the United

US TELLS/A4



65% want Arroyo out

Pulse Asia poll says 6% back coup d'etat

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

UP TO 65 PERCENT OF Filipinos believe that the resignation or removal of President Macapagal-Arroyo from office is the best way to solve the country's political crisis although they have not formed a consensus on how her successor should be chosen, according to the latest nationwide survey by Pulse Asia Inc.

In its analysis of the survey, conducted from Feb. 18 to March 4 this year, Pulse Asia said Ms Arroyo's declaration of a state of national emergency may have influenced the desire of more Filipinos to see her step down.

The proportion who chose the resignation option is larger among those who were interviewed after the declaration of a state of emergency (61 percent) than among those who were interviewed prior to 24 February 2006 (53 percent), said Pulse Asia. Only a quarter of the 1,200 interviews were made after Proclamation No. 1017 was issued on Feb. 24.

The survey had a margin of error of 3 percentage points either way at the 95 percent confidence level.

65% WANT/A4



SCHOOLYEAR ENDS BUT NOT PROTESTS. Students' rally at the Quiapo Church on Thursday was short on protesters but long on meaning as they claim it signals the start of the youth's so-called "Summer Strike" against President Arroyo.



NO, I WELL-WISHER: President Arroyo poses with the priests and staff of the Diocese of Bayombong in Nueva Vizcaya headed by Bishop Ramon Villena (left) who turns 67 on Thursday. The known antimining advocate Villena is the third bishop Ms Arroyo met in seven days.

For P5M, call PNP 117 with info on Gringo

By Tarra V. Quismundo,
Luige A. del Puerto
and Margaux C. Ortiz

POLICE YESTERDAY SET AT P5 MILLION THE bounties for former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, who was charged with coup d'etat on Feb. 24, the day President Macapagal-Arroyo placed the country under a state of emergency in the wake of an alleged coup.

The case against Honasan, one of those linked to a rightist and leftist plot to overthrow Ms Arroyo last month, was in connection with the takeover of the Oakwood Premier apartment-hotel in Makati City by the Magdaleno group of soldiers in 2003.

Police placed a total bounty of P3 million on the heads of Honasan's six alleged co-conspirators.

PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao told reporters that posters with pictures of the seven fugitives led by Honasan would be placed

FOR P5M/A8

Pa's advice to son: JPE tells Honasan not to surrender

By Philip C. Tubeza

LIKENING FORMER SEN. GREGORIO "Gringo" Honasan to his own son, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile yesterday said he would not advise Honasan to surrender to police authorities.

Enrile said he doubted that the government case of coup d'etat against Honasan would hold water, adding that he would have known if the cashiered Army colonel was planning to violently overthrow the government.

"If I were not in the Senate, I would love to handle the case and make mincemeat of the case of anyone against these people," he added.

Enrile said he was willing to act as an intermediary but he discouraged the administration from taking drastic steps against Honasan as this could lead to a repeat of the coup-ridden years of the Aquino administration.

"I will not convince him to surrender," Enrile said, in reply to Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor's appeal for him to urge Honasan to surrender.

Honasan was Enrile's longtime military aide when Enrile was defense minister during the Marcos regime. Both of them were involved in a failed coup against Marcos that

PA'S ADVICE/A8

Tough to be a Rosales after a Sin

By Christian V. Esguerra

IT'S TOUGH BEING GAUDENCIO Cardinal Rosales.

Often measured against the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, the low-key archbishop of the powerful Metropolitan See of Manila isn't exactly staring at calm seas, especially now that he's got the red hat.

Two days before leaving for Rome for his induction into the College of Cardinals, the 73-year-old cardinal made clear no changes were forthcoming, if only to satisfy a public that can't seem to get enough of Cardinal Sin, his popular and outspoken

TOUGH/A6

Bernas urges SC to speed up 1017 ruling

By Armand N. Nocum

A ROMAN CATHOLIC EXPERT ON constitutional law yesterday urged the Supreme Court to speed up the resolution of cases questioning the legality of President Macapagal-Arroyo's proclamation of a state of national emergency and other con-

troversial orders, saying the delay was legitimizing the allegedly repressive and questionable actions of her administration.

Fr. Joaquin Bernas told a news conference he was concerned that the delay in the court's ruling on these issues could lead to a situation similar to martial law under the deposed dictator Ferdinand

Marcos where the high court "legitimated actions that were later disowned by the 1987 Constitution."

Thus, the only way for the court to stop making itself a legitimizer of allegedly repressive laws would be for it to immediately rule on cases involving the suppress-

BERNAS/A10

Pasig businessman killed in front of wife; she tags Chavit

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.
Metro
and Leoncio Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BUSINESSMAN LEONARDO UMALE HAD just gotten off his white Mercedes-Benz and was about to enter his eight-story

Pearl Plaza Building at the Ortigas Center in Pasig City shortly before noon yesterday. He never made it inside.

In front of his wife and in the full view of students eating in restaurants on the ground and upper floors of the building on Pearl Drive, one of at least four men shot Umale at close range, hitting him four

times in the nape and head.

His building electrician, Ernesto Lanton, also sustained a gunshot wound in his belly. He was still being operated on as of press time.

Hours after Umale was killed, his wife Clarissa emerged from the emergency room of The Medical City and yelled at two

reporters waiting outside.

"You should interview Chavit Singson," she said in Filipino, repeating it about three times, while clutching a brown rosary. Her green blouse and cream pants were splattered with the dried blood of her husband. She was referring to Ilocos Sur

PASIG/A10

FORECAST: Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers while Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms becoming frequent rains over Southern Mindanao. The rest of the country will be cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE PAGASA

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	
Batangas	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Tarlac	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
La Union	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Taytay	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Lagazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Cagayan	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Bacolod	Cloudy with Rain	
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	
Cebu	Cloudy with Rain	
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rain	
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rain	
Zambanga	Cloudy with Rain	
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rain	
Bavao	Cloudy with Rain	

GMA foes to revive impeachment

Party-list solons to ask SC to stop DOJ probe

By Michael Lim Ubac

WITH TIME RUNNING OUT, the Batasan 6 yesterday decided it would petition the Supreme Court to stop the Department of Justice from continuing to hear the rebellion charges filed against them for allegedly conspiring to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo last month.

The six party-list congressmen will file with the high court next week a petition for certiorari and a temporary restraining order against the DOJ.

"Yes, anywhere (but the DOJ)," said lawyer Romeo Capulong, when asked at a press conference at the House of Representatives where he would like his clients to be investigated.

"We've completely lost trust in the DOJ under [Secretary Raul] Gonzalez. We want someone [with] whom we can have a level of trust," he said.

Capulong is the lawyer for party-list Representatives Satur Ocampo, Rafael Mariano, Liza Maza, Teodoro Casiño, Joel Virador and Crispin Beltran, and six suspected communist rebels named in the rebellion case at the DOJ.

Last Monday, the DOJ ordered the Batasan 6 to submit their counter-affidavits within a "non-extendable period" of 10 days after which their case would be deemed submitted for resolution.

In Capulong's view, the DOJ should inhibit itself from investigating the rebellion charges for its "lack of impartiality, extreme bias and prejudice."

He also threatened to seek the disbarment of the justice secretary for continuing to "violate the rights of my clients."

"What we're up against is a government without respect for the rule of law - (public officials) placing the law in their own hands and making unilateral decisions," Capulong said.

He said the DOJ was following a Malacañang "script," citing the case of Beltran who was investigated, charged and brought to court all in one day.

Of the 47 affidavits submitted to the Makati Regional Trial Court to support the rebellion charges against Beltran, 44 had no "probative value," Capulong said.

"In all my 50 years (of prac-

ticing law), this is the most complicated case in the history of the DOJ," said Capulong, who had served as a justice in the international human rights tribunal in the International Court of Justice.

Under Rule 112 of the Revised Rules on Criminal Procedures, the Metropolitan Trial Courts (MTC), public prosecutors and the Sandiganbayan can conduct preliminary investigations in lieu of DOJ prosecutors.

The Sandiganbayan, though, through the Ombudsman can only investigate graft, not rebellion, charges.

"We will avail of the limited space," said Capulong, when asked what he would do if the DOJ refused to inhibit itself from the proceedings.

His clients were willing to travel anywhere to attend hearings should the Supreme Court decide that the charges should be heard by an MTC, he added.

"First things first," said Maza, who said the Batasan 6 had decided to utilize all the legal defenses available to "every Filipino" in their effort to disprove the charges.

By Christine O. Avendaño

OPPOSITION LEADERS YESTERDAY EXPRESSED confidence they would have enough witnesses, evidence and support from their fellow lawmakers to initiate a new impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero and Rep. Gilbert Remulla told reporters the case would be filed in July with at least the 79 supporters needed to endorse it and send it to the Senate for trial. The House is dominated by Ms Arroyo's allies.

"We are preparing a second impeachment complaint to be filed in the third or last week of July," Escudero said.

He said the 51 lawmakers who supported the impeachment bid that failed last year would be joined by members of the majority who had become disgruntled with the President over her recent declaration of a state of national emergency.

Hopeful

"We are hopeful that those who are on the brink or in the middle of the road, so to speak, will be joining the minority in the next couple of days or weeks," he said.

The opposition last year failed to muster the required one-third vote of the 236-seat House to impeach the President, who has continued to deny allegations she had cheated in the 2004 election.

Ms Arroyo declared a state of national emergency on Feb. 24 to thwart what she claimed was a

broad conspiracy among the communists, rebel military officers and civil society groups to topple her.

New warning

Yesterday, she warned politicians aligning themselves with the communists that, in the end, it would be the people who would suffer if they succeeded in unseating her.

Speaking at the gathering of American business chambers in the Asia-Pacific region, Ms Arroyo said her economic reforms had been "embraced" in the global marketplace and the "recent attempts at political instability had been discounted."

"Our market is up - the stock market, bond market, peso - but woe to the backward-looking political opportunists who stoop to unholy alliances with the apostles of an ideology already discredited by the world," the President said.

"To them, my message is: The markets will punish our nation and our people if we stray from constitutional democracy."

In her speech, the President told the American businessmen of her bid to reform the country's system of government "to make our democracy move faster."

"Modern economies are outstripping our political system and



MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

we are changing it by constitutional reform," she said.

"I am committed to microfinance and the power of entrepreneurs, not to micromanagement and state-run enterprises. I want to create engineers, not sloganists. I want to create good jobs, not mindless mobs," she said.

The President said the country's investment in high speed Internet and fiber optic cables had led to an "explosion of the outsourcing industry."

She said 120,000 jobs at good wages had been created in the call centers and outsourcing businesses "that didn't exist just five years ago." She called this a "revolution."

Ms Arroyo vowed to the American businessmen that her administration would do its part "to make the Philippines a business-friendly place to live, work and invest [in]."

"Government must be a partner to ensure domestic tranquility and fairness to the people, not to dictate, or interfere with the marketplace. And that is the philosophy of our administration," she said. With AP, AFP reports

Making the better choice even better
is just a matter of timing.

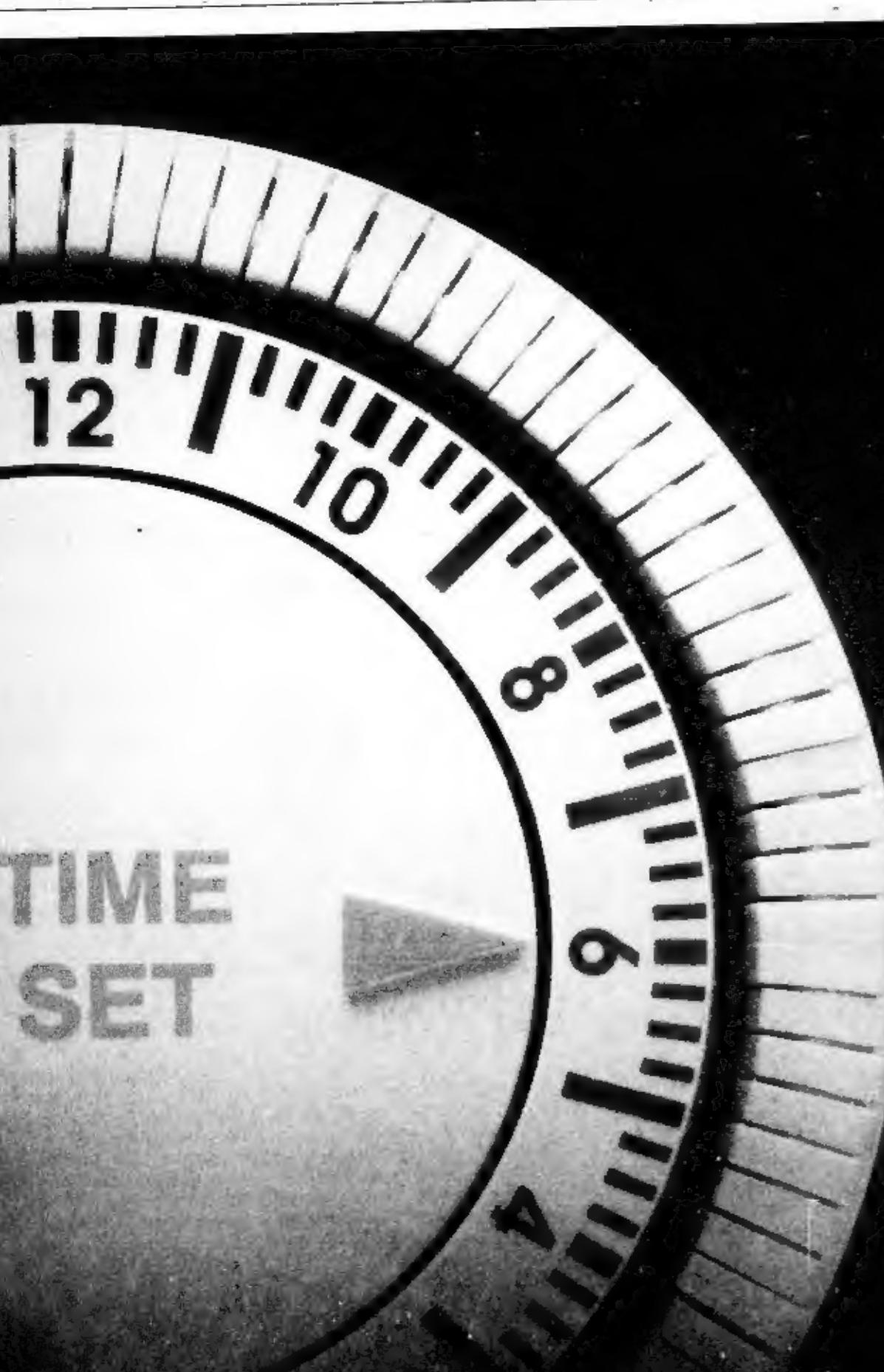
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TIME
SET



Time correspondent stands by story on foiled coup attempt

TIME MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT Nelly Sindayen has finally broken her silence, issuing a statement affirming the veracity of her article implicating Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, and Pastor Saycon, secretary general of the Council on Philippine Affairs, in a foiled coup attempt last month.

"Please note that I stand by the article and have nothing further to add," Sindayen said in a letter to the National Bureau of Investigation.

The article, titled "Emergency Rules," appeared in the Time Asia edition of Feb. 26.

Reynaldo Esmeralda, chief of the NBI Special Task Force, said Sindayen's letter would be enough basis for the bureau to issue a subpoena against Saycon, who declined earlier summons to appear at the NBI.

"We are not satisfied with (Saycon's) letter explaining the circumstances surrounding the Feb. 23 meeting at Cojuangco's house," Esmeralda said.

He said Saycon has to go to the NBI to answer "clarificatory questions" concerning his alleged role in the foiled coup plot, as Sindayen had reported.

With the Sindayen letter, the NBI can now also go after the other personalities mentioned in the Time article, said Esmeralda.

"The names of the personalities included in the meeting would hopefully be revealed when Mr. Saycon responds to our subpoena," he said.

"If we gather enough evidence proving that these people were involved in the coup plot, we will file the appropriate charges against them," he added.

Esmeralda said that if Sindayen or her lawyers agree, the Time correspondent could swear to and sign her name to the Time article, which would turn it into a public document.

In the Time article, Sindayen re-



COJUANGCO

ported having been invited to witness a meeting on Feb. 23 at the Makati home of Cojuangco "where a possible plan for a withdrawal of support from President Macapagal-Arroyo was being discussed."

Sindayen said the meeting was attended by more than a dozen politicians and businesspeople, including Pasig Rep. Robert Jaworski Jr., Cojuangco's son-in-law, and Ding Tanjuatco, a former congressman and cousin of Cojuangco.

Sindayen also reported that Saycon spoke on the phone to a person he identified as an American official in Washington who supposedly assured the group of US support, and a man whom he addressed as "Deka," later identified as Army Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim.

Saycon allegedly said that a military contingent was to march to the EDSA Shrine on Feb. 24, where they would be met by a group of Catholic bishops and a Marine general who would read a statement withdrawing support from Ms Arroyo, according to the Time magazine article.

Lim was dismissed as commander of the First Scout Ranger regiment and arrested on Feb. 23 after the Armed Forces leadership learned of his plan to march with anti-Arroyo protesters. Margaux C. Ortiz

Correction

IN THE MARCH 16 ISSUE, the editorial on Page A10—"Subversion"—misstated that a lawyer for the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism is a sister of PCIJ executive director Sheila Coronel. Lawyer Sandra Marie Olaso Coronel is married to a distant cousin of journalist Sheila Coronel.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Duty Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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65% want Arroyo out as best way to solve RP crisis

From page A1

The results showed that 59 percent of the respondents believed that Ms Arroyo's resignation was in the best interest of the country. Most of the respondents seeking the President's ouster were poor (Class D and E).

With 6 percent wanting Ms Arroyo forcibly removed either by a coup or foreign government intervention, the number of those who want the President out of office by any means went up to 65 percent.

Like the October 2005 survey, there was no clear trend on how Filipinos wanted Ms Arroyo replaced in case she resigned—38 percent thought it best that special elections be held; 21 percent favored Vice President Noli de Castro taking over either for the balance of Ms Arroyo's term or in a caretaker role for a new government under a new Constitution.

Only a third or 34 percent of Filipinos believed that the President's continued stay in office

was the most beneficial scenario, and a large plurality of them were from the upper crust (Classes A, B and C).

These respondents were also split on whether Ms Arroyo should finish her term up to 2010 or stay only until Charter change had been completed.

Aversion to military rule

The survey also showed the Filipinos' keen aversion to military adventurism. Four out of 10 Filipinos said that a coup was the most imminent to the national interest at present, regardless of whether the military and police choose who should lead the country or they decide to lead the country themselves.

Only 29 percent thought that Ms Arroyo's resignation was most adverse to the country's interest, higher than the 19 percent who believed her continued stay in office was worst and the 12 percent who believed foreign intervention was the most contemptible.

Pulse Asia noted that there was



THE THINGS students plan this summer include the youth's continuing protest against President Arroyo which they begin over again on Thursday in Quiapo, Manila.

with Ms Arroyo's boast that she was the best person to lead the country, the same number of Filipinos who thought actress Susan Roces should be in Malacañan.

Results were mixed on the best leader for the country with 23 percent picking De Castro, 17 percent choosing former President Joseph Estrada, and 13 percent opting for Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

October 2005 survey. He was followed by Ramos (31 percent) and Ms Arroyo (22 percent).

In contrast, half of the respondents considered Ms Arroyo the least worthy of their trust, followed by Ramos (38 percent), and Estrada (25 percent).

Distrust ratings

"While the distrust ratings of former Presidents Ramos and Estrada declined by 11 and 9 percentage points, respectively, between October 2005 and March 2006, that of President Arroyo remained statistically the same (55 percent versus 50 percent)," Pulse Asia said.

Aside from Proclamation No. 1017, the significant events during the survey period were the arrests of some lawmakers, the crackdown on media, rallies commemorating the 20th anniversary of Edsa I, renewed calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation, the standoff at Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, the rescue and recovery operations in Leyte, and the peso's gyrations.

US tells Erap, JV, Ping: We bugged you; legal notices served

From page A1

States to face charges under an extradition treaty between Manila and Washington.

Aragoncillo, 46, an intelligence analyst of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Michael Ray Aquino, 39, a former police senior

superintendent and Lacson aide, were arrested in New Jersey and New York, respectively, last September on espionage charges

in connection with the alleged passing of classified information to Filipino opposition leaders.

The charges carry a maximum

penalty of 25 years imprisonment.

In all, 150 documents, including 37 classified as "secret," were allegedly transmitted to the Filipino leaders from May to August 2005.

White House 1st spy case

Last October, ABC News reported that Aragoncillo had also pilfered documents from the office of Vice President Dick Cheney in what it said was the first case of spying in the White House. Some of the documents were reported to be damaging to President Macapagal-Arroyo who was described as weak and overbearing.

Estrada has admitted getting documents from Aragoncillo, but stressed that these did not seem to be sensitive information. Lacson, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Rep. Roilo Golez of Parañaque also acknowledged receiving e-mails from either Aragoncillo or Aquino.

Asked if he got the legal notice, Estrada said, "No, I have not received any. Maybe they brought it to Polk (his house in San Juan) address, but my lawyers should have brought it here if there's any," said Estrada, who is detained in his Tanay rest house.

Asked if this would mean that he's going to New Jersey, Estrada said, "Okay you, ha?"

Ejercito said he had received a notice from Interpol, through the NBI, informing him that he had been a recipient of information from Aragoncillo.

"It's nothing," he said.

Lacson confirmed he received the notice in December but shrugged it off as "a matter of statutory procedure." He said the notice simply told him that his e-mail account had been found in a laptop seized from Aquino. He said he had thrown the paper away.

In the legal notices, the Estradas were told that Judge Jose Linares of the US District Court of New Jersey authorized on Aug. 22, 2005, "the interception of wire and/or electronic communications" over the telephone and/or e-mail accounts of telephone number (856) 693-1614, LARAGONCILLO@hotmail.com and JUAN_MIGUEL0922@yahoo.com.

Phone and e-mails tapped

The notices stated that the interception happened between Aug. 22 and Sept. 12, 2005, "by on or about which date all original recordings were sealed by order of this court."

"During the period of authorized interception, wire and/or electronic communications to or from your telephone and/or communications were intercepted," the notices stated.

The sources said Lacson also received a similar notice.

A diplomatic source, who asked not to be named because he was not authorized to speak to the media, said the legal notices were in line with the requirements under US law to notify persons who had undergone surveillance.

Signal of prosecution?

Asked whether the notices could be taken as a signal that its recipients faced prosecution, the source said, "We don't know at this point. It should be taken at its face value—as notices."

"It's like a warning to them to take the matter seriously, that



LACSON: It's a matter of statutory procedure.



EJERCITO served notice he may need a lawyer.



AQUINO: Former senior superintendent/Lacson aide.



ARAGONCILLO: FBI intel analyst

they cannot ignore this and that anything can happen. It's actually favorable since they will no longer be taken by surprise by whatever legal action may follow," one lawyer said.

The source said the "prudent thing" for the Estradas to do was to consult with a US lawyer practicing in this field and make inquiries of the prosecutors if necessary. With a report from Volt Contreras and Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research

Panasonic ideas for life

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Ringer Melody	1 melody	14 melodies	15 melodies	14 melodies	10 melodies	10 melodies	14 melodies
Polyphonic Ring Tones	6 tones	32 tones	6 tones	6 tones	5 tones	5 tones	6 tones
Recordable Customized Ringer	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Key Lock	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Colored LCD	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Large LCD with Blue Backlight	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lighted Handset Keypad	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SMS (Text Messaging) Capable*							
Phone Directory	11 stations	20 stations	200 stations	200 stations (voicemail)	200 stations (voicemail)	200 stations (voicemail)	200 stations
Handset Locator (Paging)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Intercom w/ 2-way paging							
Speakerphone							
Dual Keypads							
Telephone Answering System							
USB Connection							
Infrared Port for Data Exchange							
Audio Connector							
Baby Monitor							
Mult-Handset Capability (Optional)	up to 6 handsets	up to 6 handsets	up to 6 handsets	up to 6 handsets			

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Deal with Marcoses needs Palace OK

By Alcuin Papa

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO would have to approve any compromise between the government and former First Lady Imelda Marcos not only on the latter's fabulous jewelry collection but all the ill-gotten Marcos assets said to be worth billions of pesos.

Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) Commissioner Ricardo Abcede yesterday welcomed the statement of Marcos' lawyer Roberto Sison affirming his client's openness to the idea of entering into a compromise with the government on all of the so-called Marcos wealth.

"In the end... we might still need the approval of the President on this matter as it concerns national interest. But this (Sison's statement) is a good development. What is important is that both sides are willing to come together and discuss [things]," Abcede said.

He said that if the government was willing to reach out "to communists and separatists," there was no reason it could not do the same with the Marcoses and their cronies.

Of late, the PCGG had said it was willing to enter into a compromise on the multibillion-peso coconut levy fund with businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco and on four companies owned by taipan Lucio Tan.

Why not?

"We are talking with the communist rebels and the Moro separatists. Why can't we talk with Mrs. Marcos and their alleged cronies? Reaching out? Let's reach out to them as well," Abcede said.

The Supreme Court had already ruled, however, that the coconut levy funds were public in nature and thus belonged to the coconut farmers from whom they were collected, and the Tan companies were not ill-gotten and should be returned to the control of the taipan.

On the other hand, Abcede said, an out-of-court settlement with Mrs. Marcos would not be completed overnight. First, an inventory of the Marcos assets, including those seized and already sold by the government, would have to be taken.

Then, he said, the PCGG would have to come up with a sharing option, which the two parties could then negotiate.

Once an agreement was drawn, he said, the PCGG through the solicitor general would take this to the courts for final arbitration.

On the reported 70-30 sharing scheme in favor of the government being bandied about, Abcede said nothing was final since the decision would have to come from Malacañang.

"It's a very long process," he said, adding that there was no time-frame for completion of the deal.

For his part, Sison said the compromise being espoused by the PCGG was a "pragmatic approach" to ending almost two decades of litigation between the government and the Marcoses. He said an agreement should include all Marcos assets found in the Philippines and all over the world.

Oil firms cut prices of LPG

By Abigail L. Ho

THE HUGE DROP IN THE INTERNATIONAL contract price of liquefied petroleum gas this month has prompted oil firms to again reduce cooking gas prices by 5¢ centavos per kilogram.

Petro Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Chevron Philippines Inc. and Total (Philippines) Corp. all slashed their LPG prices by the same level at 12:01 a.m. today.

The companies cited the reduction in the international contract price of LPG as well as competitive market forces as the reason for the rollback, the third this month.

With this new price reduction, Petro's Gasul can now be bought for between P496 and P506 per 11-kilogram cylinder, Shell's Shellane for between P505 and P520, and Total's TotalGaz by around P493.50, give or take P10 per cylinder.

These new suggested retail prices already include the 12-percent value-added tax.

The new retail price for Chevron's Caltex LPG was not available as of press time.

According to data from the Department of Energy, the international contract price of LPG shed almost \$100 this month, falling to \$530 per metric ton (MT) from an all-time high of \$625.50 per MT in February.

In January, international prices soared to \$582 per MT from \$538 per MT the month before.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the DOE would "continue to closely monitor the developments in LPG prices in the world market to make sure that the market trends reflect in the domestic prices."

Since the start of the year, LPG prices have risen four times by P2.17 per kilogram or P23.87 per 11-kilogram cylinder.

Prices have since gone down thrice for a total of P1.68 per kilogram or P18.48 per cylinder.

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A6

Tough to be a Rosales after a Sin

From page A1

"I don't think I'm going to change—I'm a shepherd, especially to those in need," he told reporters Wednesday. He leaves on Friday for Rome.

Rosales said it wasn't fair to compare him with Sin, who helped oust Presidents Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001 and in the process defined the role of the Church in the largely Roman Catholic country.

Sin became the Church, the Church was Sin.

It's good that Rosales knows he's entering the Sacred College of Cardinals knowing who he is and "knowing what I want to be because my predecessor was really a charismatic person, a political figure."

More a home person

Rosales said he was more of a "home

person," one who's happy "wearing slippers" around people like those of Mindanao where he once served as Bulidnon archbishop. But that's not to say that he's a detached observer in the face of social injustice. He had spoken out in the past when there was a need for it.

As one of 15 new princes of the Church, Rosales joins two Filipinos, Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and Jose Cardinal Sanchez who is now based at the Roman Curia.

"Unworthy as I am, I was selected for that," he said, recalling that he even asked Vidal if he should accept the invitation of Pope Benedict XVI.

"He told me, 'Don't insult the Holy Father. You don't do that.' (So) this is it. You enter into a special relationship with the chief shepherd of the universal church as a companion, cooperator, assistant and counselor."

Organizing farmers, cooperatives

and even village folk for anti-illegal logging protest marches in Manila and cataloging them in the process—this was the world Rosales said he knew and grew up in.

Grass-roots politics

So while Sin looked at politics from the top, Rosales tackled it at the grass roots, with the same clarity of effort coming from a strictly moral and pastoral perspective.

"This is more or less my life so no need to, I would say, compare because he was in a completely different league," he said.

Rosales was cool to the idea of another Edsa uprising as President Macapagal-Arroyo faced a restive opposition seeking her resignation over allegations she stole the 2004 presidential election—a charge she has vehemently denied.

"It fails when you repeat," he said,

explaining that events like the 1986 bloodless revolution were something people didn't prepare for. "We are wise men. We have to be intelligent and responsible. Let us be students of history."

No patent on EDSA I

Rosales also sought to put in context the widespread impression that EDSA I was a single-handed effort by Sin. No, the event didn't have his patent.

There were also bishops like Francisco Claver, Carmelo Morelos, the late Antonio Portich, a 1973 Ramon Magsaysay Awardee for Public Service, and others who played key roles in restoring democracy, he noted.

"Please be fair to history," he said.

Besides, the Church's involvement in political and economic matters occupies only a small place in the whole gamut of its priorities, he said. "We don't want to imprison the Church in

that little area."

Theology of the crumbs'

More important to Rosales is to shepherd the poor, mainly by propagating the "theology of the crumbs" through his Fondo ng Pinoy. It's a pioneering project encouraging people to set aside as little as 25 centavos daily for the poor.

"You see, the powerful, they could fend for themselves. But the poor, somebody should go visit them, should look for resources for them and that's what we are doing," he said.

"Ask me to change, please do not for the sake of these people," said Rosales.

A source in the archbishop's staff told the INQUIRER that Malacañang had quietly inquired if Rosales would be receptive to the idea of Ms Arroyo attending his induction and offering a chartered plane to fly him and other bishops to Rome.

Rosales was reported to have politely declined the offer. The President was advised to attend a thanksgiving Mass instead in Manila on April 1, a day after his return.

Self-effacing

Declining the offer was consistent with the self-effacing character of Rosales who always made an effort never to make big fuss over his activities, the source said.

"It's not that he just didn't want the President to be there," the staff member said, "in all humility, he was really shy about it."

Asked what he would tell Pope Benedict XVI if he inquired about the situation in the Philippines, Rosales replied:

"Sometimes we magnify what is happening in the country. There are more countries where the situation is worse a hundred times. These are all within the attention and concern of the Holy Father. We could be the best torturers. The Holy Father might laugh at me."

Miriam to AFP ...

From page A1

Miriam Defensor-Santiago yesterday took a swipe at Col. Tristan Kison, AFP spokesperson, for making the "really silly, famous statement."

She said: "These military men are dreaming."

"It is not intelligent for the Armed Forces to claim that only they are holding the nation together. It is not the [AFP] that is holding the nation together; it is the rule of law."

Santiago expressed the hope that "those who are titillated by the prospect of ruling the country without passing through a presidential election will have the intelligence to think twice before they join any military enterprise to this effect."

And then she let the military have it: "They are like worms. They should stay in their holes and not show their heads."

On Tuesday, Kison told reporters that the military had been a target of destabilization because it was "one of the strong pillars holding the nation."

"If we break," he said, "the nation will collapse."

Easy prey

Santiago also said the threat of a coup against President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration remained large because the low pay of military men meant that they could "easily be bought."

Thus, she said, the administration's enemies would try to unseat the President using the military.

"You can buy one brigade. You can buy the commander and he will distribute the largesse," said the senator, one of Ms Arroyo's staunchest allies.

"The main problem is that our military can easily be bought because of the extremely low compensation that they receive as members of the military," she told reporters.

According to Santiago, the administration cannot yet rest easy.

She said there were three critical dates for Ms Arroyo: "Oh, yes, we can expect that on May 1 during Labor Day. On June 12, that's for sure, and during the State of the Nation Address."

Dangerous game

But Santiago warned civilians, particularly businessmen, against financing coup attempts against the administration.

"These civilian components think they will be the ones who will be installed in the presidency. But that is not borne out by history. The result has always been that the military decided to keep power for itself," she noted, adding:

"So it is an extremely dangerous game to try to induce the military with money to overthrow President Arroyo because it is based on the impression that the government will remain civilian in character after President Arroyo leaves."

Pariah

Santiago also warned the AFP against taking over the government, saying that a military-ruled Philippines would become a pariah in the global community.

"Will they get recognition from the 200 countries or so in the international community?" she said, pointing out that "under international law, you will not be a full-fledged state unless you're able to get recognition from your fellow states."

She added: "We have already seen that the international community today does not want to recognize military dictatorships. So that will be the problem. We will become a sealed hermit kingdom once more if we have a military government."

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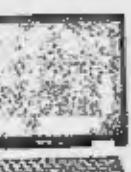
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Pagasa warns of more disasters with onset of La Niña

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE NATION HAS HARDLY RECOVERED FROM the shock of the mudslide that buried an entire village in Southern Leyte last month, but now comes the weather bureau warning that the next three months may produce a similar catastrophe.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said that the number of typhoons during the La Niña period—predicted to hit from April to June—could increase by 200 percent.

For a country where at least 19 typhoons on the average enter its area of responsibility every year, that's saying a mouthful.

"The geology is there, the fault is there, and there is too much rain. The Southern Leyte mudslide is likely not the last that will happen during the year, considering the La Niña period. So we need to educate the people on the warning systems," Pagasa chief Graciano Yumul Jr. said in a press conference yesterday.

The weather bureau is closely watching the eastern seaboard, deemed to be the hardest hit by the La Niña phenomenon, so called because it is the reverse side of El Niño, which is characterized by a prolonged dry spell which often leads to drought.

Pagasa raised a flood and landslide warning in eastern Visayas, particularly Samar and Leyte; the Caraga region (the Agusan and Surigao provinces) especially Surigao; Bicol; northeastern Luzon and Davao Oriental, all of which are on the eastern seaboard.

"All typhoons will enter the country through eastern Visayas during this season," Yumul said.

Pagasa said it would undertake an education campaign targeting the barangay captains of all the 42,000 barangays in the country, noting that the village chiefs would be the key to disaster mitigation.

He said the bureau planned to distribute tens of thousands of primers on floods, storm surges, tornados, and tsunamis. He said they would be printed in the vernacular to make them easier to understand.

The government is also set to acquire two Doppler radars, devices that can measure wind velocity and predict the volume of rainfall, within the year.

"It's not the number of typhoons but the

amount of rainfall and the wind strength that we are carefully monitoring," Yumul said.

Doppler radars cost anywhere between P55 million to P89 million each, depending on whether these are from Europe or Japan. The Philippines has

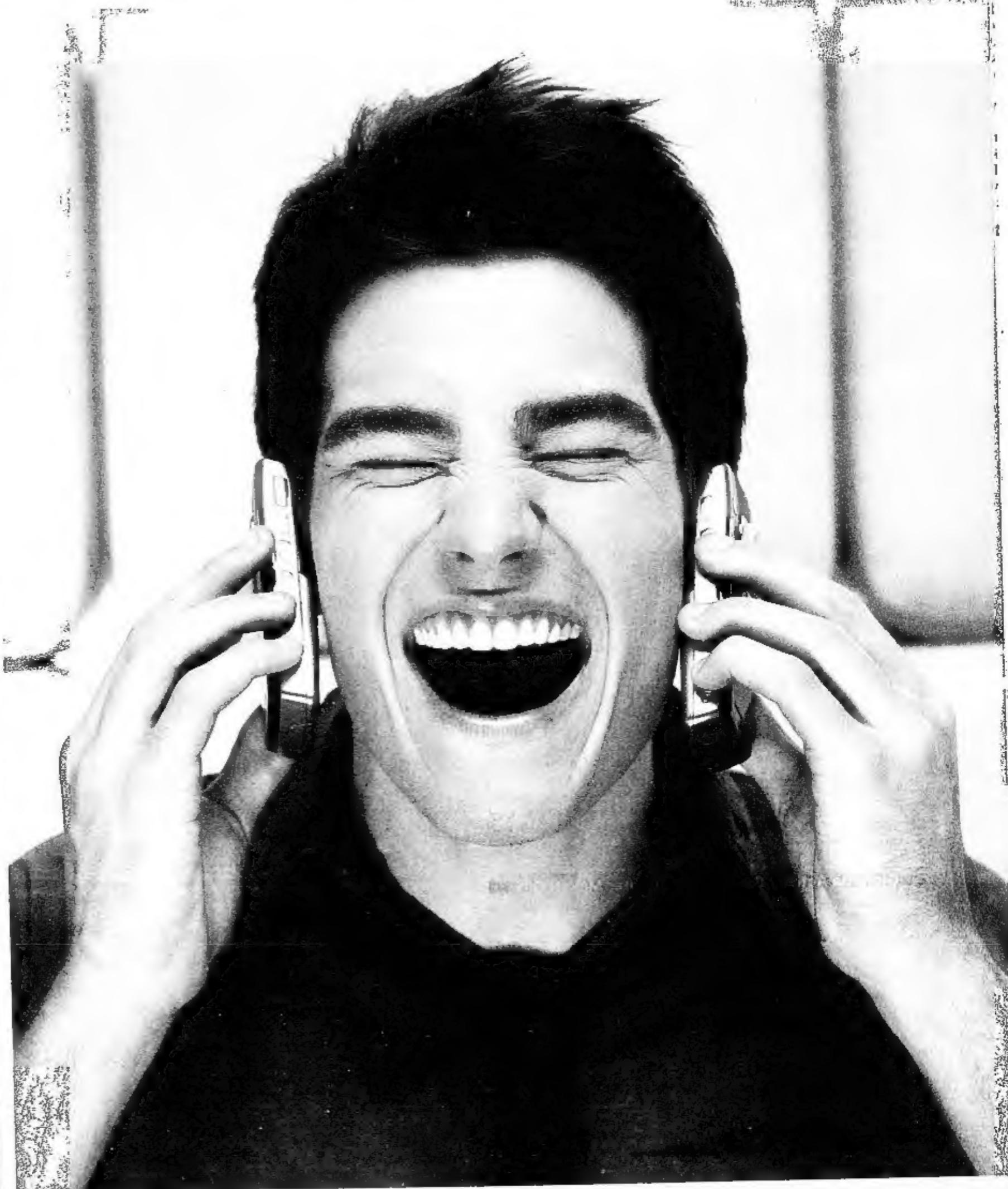
allocated P110 million for the purchase of the radars this year and is hoping to buy 10 of the devices by 2010.

Pagasa said the conditions indicating that a La Niña loomed continued to be present based on the bureau's February monthly report.

Yumul said the World Meteorological Organization had mapped out two scenarios after the La Niña. One is that the La Niña will extend up to December. The other is that the phenomenon will transform into an El Niño, which is equally bad for the country.

"We don't know what's going to happen. That's why we are holding the climate forum monthly now," he said.

The climate forum, where Pagasa briefs weather-sensitive government agencies like the Department of Agriculture and local officials, used to be held quarterly.



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1st Reading: Gen 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-28

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders, "Listen to another example: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. (...) When harvest time came, the landowner sent his servants to the tenants to collect his share of the harvest. But the tenants seized his servants, beat one, killed another and stoned another."

Again the owner sent more servants, but they were treated in the same way.

"Finally, he sent his son, thinking: 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they thought: 'This is the one who is to inherit the vineyard. Let us kill him and his inheritance will be ours.' So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him."

"Now, what will the owner of the vineyard do with the tenants when he comes?" They said to him, "He will bring those evil men to an evil end, and lease the vineyard to others who will pay him in due time."

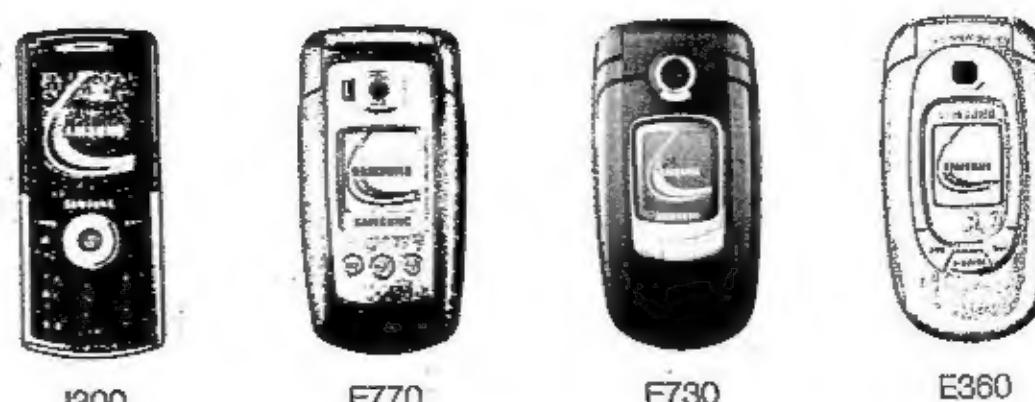
And Jesus replied, "Have you never read what the Scriptures say? The stone which the builders rejected has become the keystone. This was the Lord's doing; and we marvel at it. Therefore I say to you: the kingdom of heaven will be taken from you and given to a people who will yield a harvest."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard these parables, they realized that Jesus was referring to them. They would have arrested him, but they were afraid of the crowd who regarded him as a prophet.

Commentary

Israel loved Joseph best and the familiar story evolves into jealousy, hatred, attempted murder. His older brother keeps the others from killing him and he is sold into slavery for 20 pieces of silver. Jesus' story tells of a property owner and his vineyard leased out to tenants and how they, in their greed, then their jealousy, take the vineyard for their own, treat the servants of the owner poorly, and then drag the owner's son outside the vineyard and murder him. Same old story, but Jesus speaks of himself and his coming death that will open the vineyard to others who will care for the vines, drink the wine and obey the one who shares it with them. Who do we stand with in this world?

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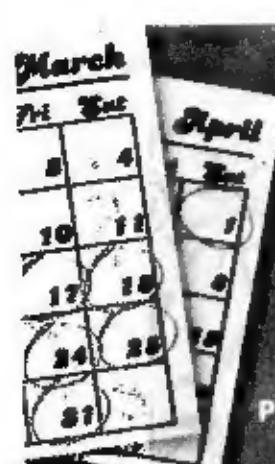
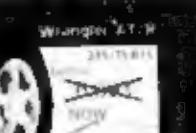
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From page A1

in strategic locations around the country possibly by the weekend. Some 5,000 of these posters are to be distributed to police stations nationwide.

Should the authorities find the accused, reasonable force would be used to take them into custody, Lomibao said.

"We will apply the necessary force... The force should be equal to the resistance. There shouldn't be any overkill," said the police chief.

The P3 million bounty for the six alleged co-conspirators is broken down as follows:

- P1 million for retired Capt. Felix Turingan, an alleged member of the Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI), a fraternity of active and retired military and police officers that Honasan founded.

- P500,000 each for retired Colonels Ernesto Macahiya, Virgilio Briones and Romeo Lazo—all said to be members of the PGBI.

- P250,000 each for George Duludiao and Lina Reyes, both said to be on the staff of the former senator.

The six allegedly helped Honasan recruit junior military officers for the takeover of Oakwood on July 27, 2003.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno announced that the rewards would be given to anyone who could lead authorities to

Honasan and his fellow accused. "We are putting up this monetary reward in order to make more effective the effort to bring into custody these wanted persons," Puno said at a press conference.

The bounties were set upon the recommendation of the PNP Rewards Evaluation Committee, which Puno then approved through DLG Memorandum Circular 2006-231. He said the money would come from an existing allocation for incentives to government informants.

Hotline

People can call the police emergency hotline, Patrol 117, or send messages to 2920 for any information on Honasan and the six others, according to the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Except for Honasan and Turingan, no bounty was announced for the rest of the 16 people against whom the police had filed charges of rebellion for their involvement in a plot allegedly hatched by disgruntled military officers, communist rebels and civilians to topple the Arroyo administration.

The coup was to coincide with the 20th anniversary of Edsa I that toppled the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos on Feb. 24.

Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, the PNP spokesperson, said no bounty was set for the others because arrest warrants had yet to be issued against them.

They include party-list Representatives Crispin Beltran and Rafael Mariano of Anakpawis, Satur Ocampo, Teodoro Casilio and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, and Lisa Maza of Gabriela; Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson;

CPP founding chair Jose Maria Sison, National Democratic Front spokesperson Luis Jalandoni, CPP central committee officials Benito and Wilma Tiamzon, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan official Nathaniel Santiago, NDF official Tires Alcantara and NDF Bicol regional party head Sotero Llamas.

Warrants issued Feb. 28

Also charged with rebellion were lawyer Christopher Belmonte, retired Col. Jake Malajagan, First Lieutenants Angelbert Gay and Patricio Bumidang, both members of the Magdalo, and a person with an alias.

The Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 145 issued on Feb. 28 arrest warrants for Honasan and the six others.

Among those that have obtained copies of the arrest warrants were the Special Mission Unit of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Counter Intelligence Group, the Legal Action Unit of the Isaf (Intelligence Service of the AFP), the Southern Metro Manila Criminal Investigation and Detection Team of the PNP Criminal Investigation and

Detection Group, the PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

"With the reward money of P5 million for any information that will lead to his (Honasan's) arrest, we believe that we will be able to do so—bring him to the bar of justice," Pagdilao said.

Posters

He said Honasan and the others were still in the Philippines based on the last report of his men. "But you know they are highly mobile. They could be here, they could be there, they could be out of the country... So the reason the reward system was approved was so we could effectively restrict their movement."

Police and NBI teams

The CIDG has teams ready to track down Honasan et al.

"They (the teams) are hunting down the 10 most wanted (persons). If there is an addition (to the list), there will be teams that will focus on it," Pagdilao said.

The NBI, for its part, has formed two teams to track down and arrest Honasan and his co-conspirators.

"We have begun our search for Honasan, with the recent issuance of an arrest warrant against him (in coordination with the military and the PNP)," NBI officer in charge Nestor Mantaring said.

Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda, NBI Special Task Force (STF) chief, said he had created two 10-member teams to find Honasan and his alleged co-conspirators.

Esmeralda said Team Alpha, led by NBI STF executive officer Arnel Dalumpines, would concentrate on arresting Honasan.

"As of now we still have no idea where Honasan is because he has not been seen in public for months," Esmeralda said. "But we have good leads like the kind of vehicle Honasan has been using."

Honasan was last seen in Manila a day before Ms Arroyo declared a state of emergency.

Esmeralda said a second team, Team Bravo led by Supervising Agent Anthony Yu, would go after other personalities allegedly behind the foiled coup attempt.

Palace to Gringo: Surrender

Malacañang yesterday asked Honasan anew to surrender. "We call on him to live up to his stature as a former senator by voluntarily yielding to police authorities," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said he agreed with Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's proposal for a peaceful surrender by Honasan.

Defensor said he and Enrile had agreed to sit down and explore the latter's ideas on how to go about this.

Honasan cannot be expected to surrender unless the govern-

ment reduces the charges against him, according to administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Santiago, a former trial court judge, said the only incentive for Honasan to surrender would be for government prosecutors to reduce the charges against him to inciting to or conspiracy to commit coup d'état.

"Unless the prosecutors change the charge, Gringo will never surrender," Santiago said.

It happened long time ago

She said the government might find it hard to pin down Honasan on coup charges because it would have to present a witness who would testify that the former senator had used violence and stealth to try to overthrow the government.

"First of all, his alleged crime happened a long time ago. The Oakwood mutiny is not a recent disturbance in our country," she said.

"So no one can say that he was caught in flagrante delicto, unless they have an eyewitness. But if they had an eyewitness, he or she would have surfaced a long time ago," she said.

Santiago said mere "plotting or holding secret meetings" to plot the ouster of the President would not qualify for the charge of coup d'état.

Honasan had led several bloody coup attempts during the term of President Corazon Aquino. With a report from Christine O. Aver-

Pa's advice to son: JPE tells Honasan not to surrender

From page A1

turned into people power, which ousted Marcos in 1986.

"I'm willing to put myself at the disposal of government, if they want to work out an acceptable solution to the problem in a way that will not put the government in a bind and these young people in a situation where they could be accused of opportunism or of giving up their ideals," Enrile said.

"People are willing to die for ideals. You must not deprive them of that," he said.

Enrile said that he was in contact with his protégé but added that he was not involved in "anything that (Honasan) is accused of."

The administration charged Honasan with coup d'état on Feb. 24 for allegedly being one of the brains of the 2003 Oakwood mutiny in Makati.

The Makati Regional Trial Court has issued an arrest warrant for Honasan.

"Yes, I talked to him. He's like a son to me," Enrile said. "I talked to him (Wednesday) morning, but I would like to add I'm not a participant to anything he is accused of."

Asked what he advised Honasan, Enrile said: "I will not tell you what I will advise him, or what I advised him."

He said Honasan did not indicate what his plans were but Enrile said that he would have known if the former senator planned to overthrow the government.

"What I know is that he has no plan. I asked him. You know, if Greg has any effort to undertake, I would have known. He would have told me," Enrile said.

Emotional pain

As to government plans to spread posters of Honasan to help hasten his arrest, Enrile said: "I would not do that if I were these people, if they're thinking at all for the country. They should not be doing that because that would cause emotional pain to some people."

Enrile, a lawyer, said he did not believe that the government could prove that Honasan was guilty of the crime of coup d'état.

"I don't think you can spell out coup d'état based on the facts

that I know of what happened in the case of Oakwood and in the case of the recent events mentioned in the papers," he said.

Not capital offense

Enrile said the "basic element" of the crime of coup d'état was "a sudden attack" against the government to seize power.

"What was attacked (in Oakwood)? If you can consider that an attack by the Oakwood mutineers, they seized a building and they simply asked, I think, (for) somebody to step down," he said.

"There was no purpose in supplanting a government. Now, I do not know whether you can consider Oakwood a government building," he added.

Enrile said those who were

planning to put up a military junta or revolutionary government could not be automatically charged with coup d'état.

"For as long as they did not do any overt act, other than planning, thinking or writing the schema of government structure that they intended to set up, the most that you can spell out as a crime against them would be probably a conspiracy to commit a crime, which is not a capital offense. It is a bailable offense," Enrile said.

Cooler heads

Enrile called for cooler heads to prevail and warned against taking any precipitate action that could worsen the country's political crisis.

He said his experience with Edsa I taught him to stop participat-

ing in plots to violently overthrow the government.

"Because of the experience I went through, because of Edsa I, I really made a promise that I will never participate in any effort to unseat a government of this country through the use of force," Enrile said.

Dangerous

"It's dangerous, not only for myself, but also for the participants—I was jailed twice, but for the country. Once you unleash that force, you will never know where it will bring us," he said.

"But one thing is for sure, it will mean blood, blood of Filipinos spilling in the streets. And I think the less we talk about these things the better for everybody. We talk too much," he said.

Rogues' gallery hit: Violation of presumption of innocence

From page A1

gallery—President Macapagal-Arroyo's idea, according to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez—could constitute one more impeachable offense on Ms Arroyo's part.

The CLCI said it would file criminal and administrative charges against Gonzalez in the Office of the Ombudsman. The case will center on the "illegal" use of public funds to go after "personal enemies of the President," it added.

Bernas said the planned public display of pictures of 16 perceived enemies of the state was violative of their constitutional right of "presumption of innocence and privacy." (Story on Page A1.)

"It's something along the line of a police officer exhibiting people in public who have been arrested. If they have not been convicted [or] charged, they are presumed to be innocent and their dignity should be respected. There is the very serious assault on dignity, I think," said Bernas, dean emeritus of the Ateneo Law School and a columnist of the INQUIRER.

Wild, Wild West

Asked to comment, Gonzalez said there was nothing illegal in the planned rogues' gallery.

"How can it be unconstitutional when [the funds] will be used for the arrest of fugitives from justice?" he said.

But Bernas pointed out that if there were "clear violations" by per-

ceived enemies of the government and there were arrest warrants, they could be arrested and duly charged.

"No need for bounty," he said. "Bounty was very useful, I think, in the times of the Wild, Wild West... when they had posters all over the city [saying] Wanted dead or alive."

Gonzalez had earlier said the amounts to be offered for information leading to the arrest of the so-called "conspirators" had yet to be determined.

But some members of the Palace cluster on intelligence supposedly wanted the bounty to go as high as P10 million per head.

Witch-hunt

Lawyer Neri J. Colmenares said public money should not be spent on this "witch-hunt," which, he observed, was "generally against political dissenters."

Colmenares likewise said the public posting of the pictures of Ms Arroyo's perceived enemies was "a violation not only of [one's] constitutional right to privacy, but also of [one's] right to be presumed innocent."

These are witch-hunting processes that use not only public funds but also the Department of Justice and the Philippine National Police, both public offices which should not be used for public persecution," he said.

Colmenares said the money would be better used to go after Jose Bolaño, the former agriculture undersecretary who was charged with graft for the P728-million fertil-

izer scam, and Virgilio Garcillano, the former election commissioner who was linked to the purported rigging of the 2004 elections.

The planned case against Gonzalez will be for culpable violation of Republic Act No. 3019 (the Anti-graft Law), which states that public officials "must act with justice and not discriminate against any one," Colmenares said.

Just file charges

Other legal eagles weighed in on the issue.

"If they have a list, they should just file charges. By talking about the list, they send a warning to everyone else so that the target is not just the people on the list but [others] who are in danger of being placed there," said Raul Panaglangan, former law dean of the University of the Philippines.

Anselmo Cadiz, president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, said Ms Arroyo's actions—including the planned rogues' gallery and the use of public funds to go after Malacanang's perceived enemies—would add to her long list of impeachable offenses.

License to kill

Mariano said a rogues' gallery was a clear threat against freedom, human rights and life itself because it would deprive him and his colleagues of due process and an "impartial, independent and effective" trial.

Ocampo warned that the plan would give law enforcement agencies the license to hunt, attack and even kill members and

leaders of progressive groups.

Maria said unleashing bounty hunters was "a testament to this government's resort to the massacre of its political enemies."

"This is trial by publicity at its worst," she said. "There is no court that has passed judgment on us, yet [they] are already sentencing to death people critical of her administration."

Maria also said she would hold Ms Arroyo responsible for "whatever happens to us."

Said Virador: "To put up bounties to hunt down suspected coup plotters flaunts the fascist, iron-hand approach of Ms Arroyo in dealing with the current political situation. This is also part of the total government crackdown on GMA's critics."

In bad faith

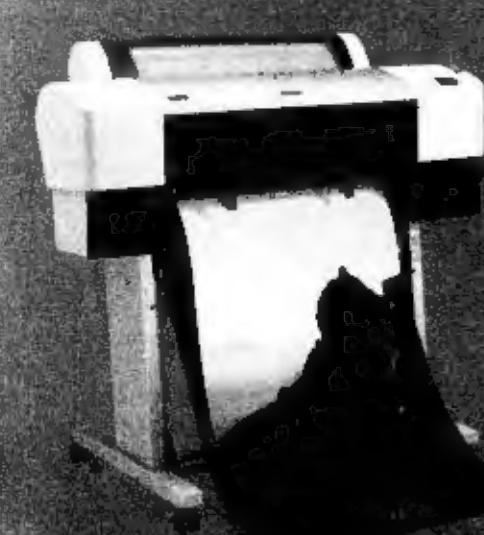
In the Netherlands, the chair of the National Democratic Front panel negotiating peace with the Arroyo administration said the latter acted in bad faith when it "converted" the list of people to be accorded immunity under the 1995 Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) into a list of persons to be arrested.

EPSON

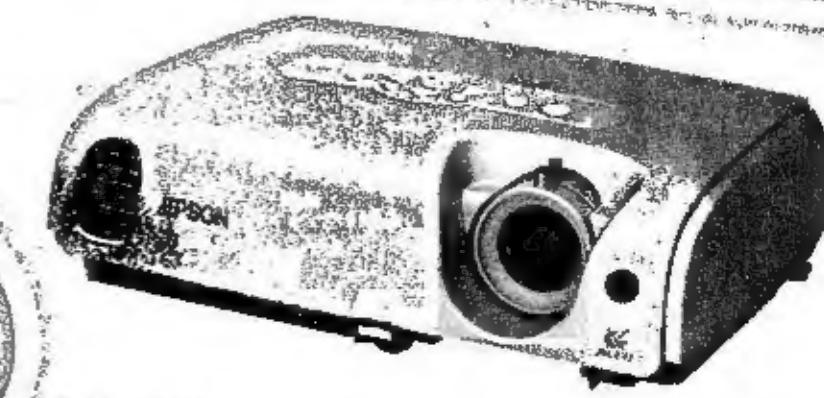
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RP is Asia's kidnapping hot spot, says think tank

THE WEAK RULE OF LAW, RAMPANT corruption in the police ranks and ineffective law enforcement continue to make the Philippines Asia's kidnapping hot spot, according to a report by a leading risk consultancy group.

The Pacific Strategies and Assessments (PSA) yesterday released a report saying the Philippine government had failed to address "these factors with any consistency or political will" and as a result kidnapping was likely to flourish in this Southeast Asian nation of 84 million people.

Reacting to the report, the Philippine National Police claimed it had made progress in curbing kidnappings.

"We are doing our best to

keep this particular crime within manageable levels. Compared to the past years, we have made some headway," PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao said.

But the Asian-based consultancy group said in its annual report on kidnapping in the Philippines that a total of 44 abductions were reported to police and government agencies last year, a 50-percent increase over 2004.

Main targets

The PSA also pointed out that the vast majority of kidnapping cases were not reported to the authorities. The consultancy group said the actual number of kidnappings in the Philippines in 2005 was estimated to be three times the official figure

and security analysts reckoned that a kidnapping occurred every three days somewhere in the country.

Chinese-Filipinos, who represent about 3 percent of the total population, remain the main targets of kidnapping syndicates, accounting for 35 percent of all kidnappings in the past three years, the PSA report said. Eleven percent of the kidnapping victims were foreign nationals.

"As a close-knit society, Chinese-Filipinos generally make attractive targets because they rarely involve police officials in the negotiation phase and they tend to pay ransom demands quickly," the report said.

"Chinese-Filipino commun-

ties also control approximately 60-70 percent of wealth in the country and are largely perceived as wealthier than their Filipino counterparts."

Victims blamed

Pagdilao said the reluctance of victims to cooperate with the PNP was hampering its efforts to solve kidnapping cases. This is one of the factors that "are contributory to the existence of kidnapping in the Philippines," he said.

If only victims would come out and help in the prosecution of suspected kidnappers, "there is a good chance that we will be able to put an end to kidnapping," the PNP spokesperson said.

The PSA report, however, said the PNP "is both part of the prob-

lem and solution" when it comes to kidnapping.

"Many kidnap victims refuse to cooperate with the PNP due to lingering suspicion that the organization protects kidnap-for-ransom syndicates and feeds intelligence back to kidnap gangs during the negotiating process," the report said.

"These suspicions are not unfounded and there are endless incidents of police collusion with kidnap syndicates operating in Manila."

Rebuilding image

Pagdilao said "a great deal" had been done to rebuild the tarnished image of the police force.

"The creation of special task forces, like Pacer (Presidential Anti-Organized Crime and Emergen-

cy Response), in going against kidnappers has greatly helped in getting back the trust of the people, especially the victims," the PNP spokesperson said.

"So we just have to work some more so we can be able to get fully the confidence and trust of the Filipino people," he added.

The PSA report said the PNP's Pacer task force had been active in infiltrating the kidnap syndicates but added: "With the Philippine economy struggling and the potential for relatively large ransoms, it is fairly easy for syndicates to recruit new members."

"The capacity for these syndicates to multiply far exceeds Pacer's ability to infiltrate and disband them," the report said. Reports from AFP and Luis A. del Puerto

Pasig businessman killed in front of wife; she tags Chavit

From page A1

Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Relatives and friends pulled her back inside the hospital before she could get near the reporters.

Police officials said the killing could be business-related. Umale also owned a home depot strip mall and a restaurant strip at the Ortigas Center.

Umale's men shot it out with the security guards of Chavit Singson in January 2005, as his family and the Ynareses of Rizal, who employed Singson's security agency, figured in a tug-of-war for the operation of a parking lot on Pearl Drive.

Singson: Umale an ally

Reached by the INQUIRER by phone, Singson, who was in Manila, said he was not involved in the murder of Umale.

"I vehemently deny all allegations hurled against me regarding Umale's death," Singson said.

The governor said he was "an ally, not an enemy of Umale."

"(He) has been asking for my help in his many cases. I tried to help him within my limits and bounds of the law," Singson said.

In a statement, Singson said he did not know why Umale's wife was linking him to the slaying.

"All I can say for now is that her husband was not exactly a good man. Masamang tao si Umale (He was a bad person). Katunayan marumi siyang kaso. Kaya marumi siyang kaaway (In fact, he had many cases. That's why he had many enemies)," Singson said.

The governor said he was willing to help in any impartial investigation of the case.

Director Vidal Queral, head of the National Capital Region Police Office, rushed to the crime scene and told reporters his men would "leave no stone unturned."

"We heard that (Umale) had figured in several business conflicts. We are still investigating," Chief Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino, Eastern Police District director, told the INQUIRER.

PO2 Roderick Quiton said Umale and his wife arrived at the building at about 11:30 a.m. Because another vehicle was parked right in front of the entrance, Umale and his wife got off their car a few meters away.

Just across the street, one of his three children was attending classes as a



POLICE secure the crime scene at the Pearl Plaza building in Ortigas Center in Pasig where businessman Leonardo Umale was shot dead.

freshman at the University of Asia and the Pacific, her classmates later said.

A stall owner said Umale would go to the building every day, where he had a unit and an office on the eighth floor.

The building, in front of the university, has a driveway running through the middle of the compound, in between restaurant stalls and the main entrance to the building. The third to eighth floors serve as dormitories.

Handguns

Umale got off on the right passenger side of his car, while his wife had gone ahead. He gave a few instructions to his driver and walked toward the entrance.

But while he was walking, four men approached him. Two of

them pulled out .45-cal. revolvers, witnesses told the police.

Suddenly, 20-year-old Bryan, a waiter at Salsa Rossa Restaurant, which is right in front of the entrance across from the driveway, heard successive gunshots.

"The gunshots were very loud.

We ducked for cover," Bryan said.

He got up after a few seconds and saw Umale slumped on the pavement, blood all over his face.

One of the four men had shot Umale in the head. Lanton, who tried to help his boss, was shot in the stomach.

Well-planned

The killers walked casually out of the building after the crime, as Clarisse rushed to embrace her already lifeless husband.

Witnesses said the gunman

was wearing a black shirt. Anoth-

Umale had many enemies

By Luis A. del Puerto

BUSINESSMAN LEONARDO Umale had many enemies and was himself no stranger to controversy.

In January last year, it took Pasig City Mayor Vicente "Enteng" Eusebio to forge a peace deal between the Umale and Ynares clans, which were fighting over a stretch of parking in the Ortigas Center in Pasig City.

That year, followers of the two camps nearly clashed on Pearl Drive, where the two groups had business interests.

On one side was Leonardo Umale, owner of Pearl Plaza, a commercial establishment across from the University of Asia and the Pacific. On the other side was Creekside Park Inc., the company that was awarded a contract by an Ortigas company to manage the parking stretch.

Also on the side of Creekside

was Casimiro Ynares III, a son of Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares, who had said he was a personal friend of the Creekside owners. The Ynareses own Manila Luxuriy, a residential condominium located at the end of Pearl Drive.

After meeting with Eusebio that month in a hotel, the feuding families agreed to declare the contested area a "free parking space."

Chavit's men

Days before, a confrontation between Umale and his two sons, on one hand, and men from the Superb Security Agency on the other, ended with security officer Jelly Dioneda getting hit with a bullet in the right shoulder.

It is still unclear to date who shot Dioneda. The confrontation was captured on video.

Superb Security Agency is reportedly owned by a son of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

er was wearing a cream jacket and was between 30 and 35 years old. Another was wearing a blue barong, witnesses added.

"The killing was well-planned. They made sure he would not survive," Alejandrino said.

Witnesses said minutes before the crime, the four killers entered the Mocha Blends coffee shop on the mezzanine of the building. They occupied a table in the open area of the coffee shop, with a clear view of the entrance.

They were not able to finish

their orders. The police found two glasses half-filled with iced tea, a bottle of water, two glasses of water, a plate with fried eggs, beef tapa and rice on the table.

A student who had sat beside them told the police that when Umale arrived, the four men left the restaurant, descended the stairs on the right side of the building and walked about 20 meters to the main entrance.

It was all over in less than three minutes, according to SPO1 Gimene Tingne.

Bernas urges SC to speed up ...

From page A1

tion of civil liberties.

For as long as it fails to rule on cases brought before it involving Presidential Proclamation No. 1017, Executive Order No. 464 and the government's so-called "calibrated preemptive response" policy against antigovernment demonstrations, the court in effect is lending legitimacy to these allegedly unconstitutional edicts and policies, Bernas said.

Last bulwark of democracy

"We are expecting the Supreme Court to come to a decision because we see the (court) as the last bulwark of liberty," the Jesuit priest said. "But the reverse can also be true because the (court) has legitimized actions that were later disowned by the 1987 Constitution."

"The Supreme Court can be a legitimizer of what's going on," Bernas added, recalling the Marcos era when the court declared as legal laws that allowed military courts to have jurisdiction over civilians and the "automatic suspension" of the writ of habeas corpus under martial law, among others. These same laws, he said, were later "disowned" by the 1987 Constitution.

EO 464, CPR, 1017

The question on the constitutionality of EO 464, which bars government officials from testifying in congressional hearings without Ms Arroyo's approval, has dragged on for about six months. In the case of PP 1017, declaring a state of national emergency, the court has given the parties 15 days to submit memoranda following last week's oral arguments.

The court also still has to rule on petitions assailing the constitutionality of the government's "calibrated preemptive response" policy of quashing protest demonstrations, which were brought to it in October.

The news conference in which Bernas spoke was arranged by the Alternative Law Groups Inc. and the Councils for the Defense of Civil Liberties to call for "an immediate stop to all government policies that violate civil liberties and suppress the people's exercise of their rights."

Asked if his statements were prompted by the fact that the President had many appointees in the high court—including Chief Justice Artemio Pangaribuan—Bernas said he would "rather not mention personalities," explaining that the propensity of the court to act as a legitimizer was "institutionally ... built-in."

SC legitimized martial law

"It's a legitimizer, and that happened under martial law," Bernas said. "Incidentally, for all the time that there is delay in decisions, the actions which are not decided on are deemed to be valid. So to that extent, EO 464, for as long as it is not decided upon by the (court), is presumed to be valid."

"Things that are going on now, for as long as they are not decided, the presumption would be for validity. If it continues indefinitely, then it could mature into something permanent," he said.

Asked if he was happy with the delays, Bernas replied: "I would be happier if there would be an earlier decision."

Queried whether he found the delays suspicious, he said: "Not necessarily, it just makes me unhappy."

"They should decide on it soon. I don't see why they still gave the parties 15 days to submit the memorandum" on the cases involving the state of emergency declaration.

'Clear, present danger rule'

Bernas said that the warrantless arrests and the clampdown on at least one newspaper during the state of emergency could have been done only under martial law.

Asked about reported plans of the government to go after the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism for posting the "Hello Garc!" conversations on its website, Bernas said the matter should be assessed through the "clear and present danger rule."

"These articles are so powerful that there is imminent danger that people will actually rise and revolt, that takes very persuasive force to be able to incite sedition. My recollection is that the offended party has not complained of violation of privacy. If privacy has not been violated, then the government has no reason to complain," he said.

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06-15	188,361 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Malaking Pulo, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-16	106,073 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Dona Jacoba, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-17	35,138 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Suplang, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-18	450,000 sqm raw land with DAR Conversion	Bgy Balas, Silang, Cavite (beside Riviera Golf & Sports Club)	P 800.00 / sqm
06-19	450,162 sqm raw land with DAR Conversion	Bgy Balas, Silang, Cavite (beside Riviera Golf & Sports Club)	P 800.00 / sqm
06-20	132,189 sqm residential raw land	Bgy Mapalad, Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija (near Fort Magsaysay)	P 400 / sqm
06-21	17,996 sqm commercial lot	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 17,000.00 / sqm

OMBUDSMAN'S REPLY

Gutierrez: My job is to uphold justice

OMBUDSMAN MERCEDITAS Gutierrez yesterday said her mandate is to uphold justice and not to protect erring government officials, including President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Reacting to a challenge from Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio Jr. that she resolve immediately all cases involving the President and her allies, Gutierrez said she would resolve all pending cases, but "only after a thorough study."

Gutierrez, who succeeded lawyer Simeon Marcelo as Ombudsman late last year, wondered why Gervacio would even be issuing a challenge to her now when it was he who was in office when the cases were filed.

"Those cases were during his time. Now he is asking me to resolve them immediately. He should know the status of these cases since he was here. He should have done his job," Gutierrez said in a phone interview.

Conviction rate

Special Prosecutor Dennis Vila Ignacio also took exception to Gervacio's claim that the Office of the Ombudsman has lost its zeal in prosecuting erring government officials.

He said it was during Marcelo's time that the Ombudsman's conviction rate of erring government personnel soared. He said it was also during Marcelo's time that the level of public support, trust and confidence for the office rose.

Gervacio, who is set to retire next week, decried the supposed depths to which the Ombudsman's office had fallen since the accession of Ms Arroyo, purportedly losing its "aggressiveness and public appeal" since the departure of Ombudsman Antonio Deserto in 2002.

He said Gutierrez should prove that she is not a tool of Malacañang by resolving the cases against the President, former justice secretary Hernando Perez, Commission on Elections chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and former agriculture undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante. Nelson R Flores

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Effective April 1, 2006, the Foreign Currency Differential Adjustment (FCDA) will be adjusted downward by 47.8% from P0.46 to P0.22 per cubic meter because of the appreciation of the peso. The average exchange rate went down to P51.82 per US Dollar in February, 2006 compared to P54.56 per US Dollar in November, 2005.

FCDA is a tariff mechanism used by utility companies that is adjusted upwards to recover losses if the peso depreciates and downwards if the peso appreciates against other currencies. Maynilad Water has to continue paying for the foreign exchange denominated Concession Fees to the MWSS, as well as loans required for its service expansion and improvements.

The decrease in FCDA was approved by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System Regulatory Office in its Resolution No. 06-004-CA as confirmed by the MWSS Board Resolution No. 2006-068, both dated March 9, 2006.

Maynilad's concession area covers the cities of Manila (all but portions of San Andres & Sta. Ana), Quezon (west of San Juan River, West Avenue, EDSA, Congressional, Mindanao Ave.), the northern part starting from the Districts of the Holy Spirit & Batasan Hills, Makati (west of South Super Hi-way), Caloocan, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa and Valenzuela, and the towns of Navotas and Marikina all in Metro Manila, Cavite City, and the towns of Bacoor, Imus, Kawit, Noveleta and Rosario all in Cavite province.

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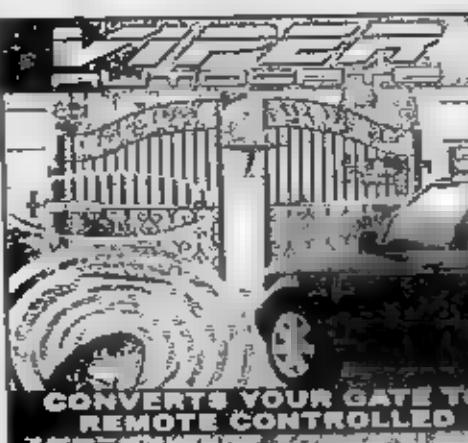
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Gov't wants Piatco ruling clarified

By Nikko Dizon and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THOUGH EVERYONE EXPECTED A COMPLETE SURRENDER AND A FINIS after the government stated it had no choice but to comply with a final ruling of the Supreme Court ordering it to pay P3 billion to the consortium that built the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's Terminal 3, holding actions are still prolonging the controversy.

The Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) said yesterday it was ready to comply with the tribunal's ruling but added it needed an explanation on issues regarding the "right to exercise ownership."

"We're still seeking clarification from the SC the right to exercise the acts of ownership," Miaa General Manager Alfonso Cusi said.

Cusi said the motion for clarification had been filed by the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), acting as the airport authority's legal counsel. Cusi, however, could not recall when the OSG motion was filed.

"The Pasay RTC (Regional Trial Court) de-

cision on the expropriation said that you (government) have possession of the Naia 3 but you can't exercise ownership until you pay the P3 billion," Cusi explained.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the government already had the funds to pay the P3-billion down payment to Naia 3 builder Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco), but added that the government wanted to be clarified on whether the sum should be paid to Piatco fully or separately to its partners like Fraport AG and contractor Takenaka Corp. of Japan.

Also, Ermita said, he wanted to get the court's opinion on whether the government could enter into lease agreements with private parties once it paid the P3 billion.

Ermita said that the government was determined to have a soft opening for Naia 3, which he claimed was 2 percent to 3 percent away from completion, by the end of this month or by the first week of April.

Cusi echoed Ermita when asked if the government would open the facility—mothballed for nearly four years—on March 31,

saying, "That's the aspiration."

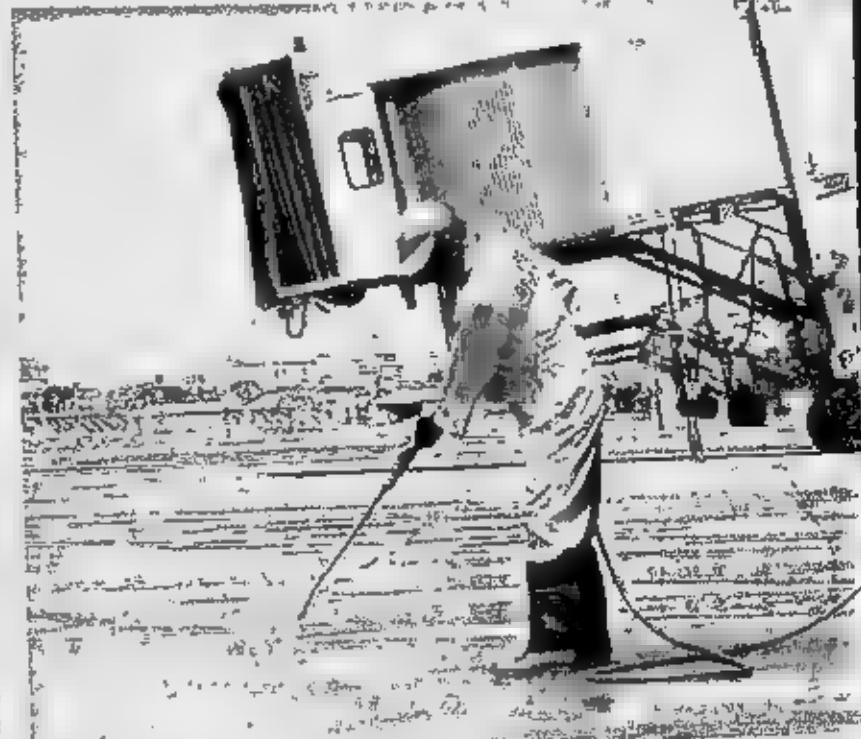
"It will be a partial opening. We have to make use of it while completion works are still going on," he said.

Cusi said that the Miaa planned on a "rolling opening" of the Naia 3, but did not say when this would take place. But since last January, the Miaa had already set a March 31-deadline for the completion of all the finishing touches on the terminal and had even begun a countdown within the agency.

But Piatco is planning to block the government's plan to open Naia 3.

The consortium led by the Cheng family claimed that opening the terminal without fully compensating Piatco would violate the court's decision. Piatco is demanding between \$350 million and \$550 million from the government. Also, Piatco stressed that the court specifically ordered the government to compensate Piatco and not any of its partners like Fraport in a separate deal.

In a statement yesterday, Piatco president Cheng Yong expressed satisfaction over the SC resolution.



AIRPORT workers hose down the tarmac of the controversial Terminal 3 of the airline Cebu Pacific.

Antimine group duped GMA, says Albay vice gov

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WAS duped into releasing P10 million to some Sorsogon towns and into forming an independent commission for nonexistent reasons, the vice governor of Albay alleged yesterday.

Vice Gov. James Calisan said the alleged mercury scare in Sorsogon, which prompted Ms Arroyo to make the release, was an invention by a few personalities in Sorsogon and antimining groups for their own vested interests, to block Lafayette's Rapu Rapu project in Albay and at the same time to generate undeserved revenues.

In a press statement, Calisan said five studies by Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (Bfar) and one by the University of the Philippines "proved beyond reasonable doubt that the mercury contamination" in Sorsogon never existed.

"But some quarters persisted in this lie until their own fishermen couldn't sell their catch thereby losing their only means of livelihood, and then used this tragedy of their own making to ask for money from the President," he said.

He said the President released P10 million last month supposedly to help the affected Sorsogon fishermen and formed an independent commission on the insistence of Bishop Arturo Bastes to find out if the Rapu Rapu project indeed caused the mercury problem.

"Knowing that there was no mercury problem, some parties submitted their own fish samples that Bfar said had mercury above the tolerable limit. But no one knew who took the samples, how and where the samples were taken. It was this unscientific study that was used to fan the mercury issue," he said.

Last week, Albay's Sangguniang Panlalawigan unanimously passed a resolution asking the National Bureau of Investigation to find out who submitted the contaminated fish to Bfar. The resolution will be released as soon as all the SP members have signed it.

"Everybody who victimized the estimated 5,000 Sorsogon fishermen and accused us in Albay of not doing anything when in fact we were only following the dictates of due process must be made to account for what they have done. They must also face the legal consequences of lying to the President to get funds from the national government that could have been used for genuine calamities like the landslide in Southern Leyte," he said.

Calisin said the supposedly independent commission to investigate alleged mercury poisoning in the area is not independent since Bishop Bastes, who now heads the body, had publicly and repeatedly called for the closure of Lafayette's mining operation in Rapu Rapu and had in fact selected antimining members to compose the commission.

Plan holders hale CAP to high court

SOME 100 PLAN HOLDERS OF THE AILING College Assurance Philippines (CAP) yesterday asked the Supreme Court to nullify a lower court's stay order that allowed the CAP to temporarily stop paying its plan holders so it can recover from its financial troubles.

In a petition filed before the high court, the petitioners, mostly parents of the education plan beneficiaries, said the Makati court's ruling effectively prevented policyholders from obtaining payments from the pre-need company's estimated P21 billion trust fund.

They said the ruling unduly prejudiced some 940,000 CAP policyholders at a time when they need the money most for the "final exams" season.

The parents want the court to annul the September 13, 2005 stay order of Judge Romeo P. Barza, particularly the portion suspending payments to plan holders.

Another December 16, 2005 order from Barza granted CAP's petition for rehabilitation and required the policyholders to wait eight years before collecting payments on their plans.

The petitioners said the lower court's ruling should be declared null and void because it lumped the pre-need plan holders with the company's creditors.

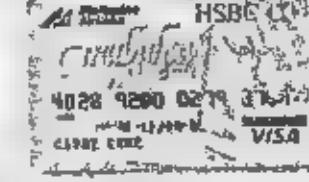
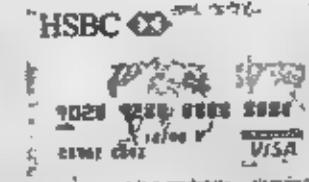
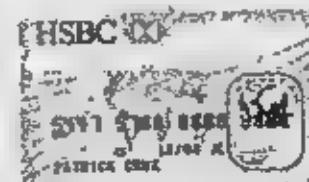
The policyholders also asked the SC to nullify the appointment of Mamerto A. Marcelo, Jr. as receiver in the CAP rehabilitation.

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JESS YUSON

Miriam comes to Nene's defense

By TJ Burgos

SENATE MINORITY LEADER AQUILINO PIMENTEL Jr., who decried the showing of a Malacañang-produced documentary portraying him as an "enemy of the state," has found an ally in administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Rushing to Pimentel's defense, Santiago yesterday cautioned administration officials and the Armed Forces against implicating people in coup plots simply because they were vocal critics of the administration.

"I am of the belief and conviction from personal knowledge that he will never cabal against the President. Conceivably the worst that can be said against the senator is that he is the President's most vocal critic," she said in a statement.

Santiago, a staunch supporter of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said Pimentel was merely exercising freedom of speech and his attacks on the Arroyo administration did not constitute "clear and present danger" to the State.

"I believe that Malacañang officials would

be well-guided if they would bear in mind that they absolutely have no authority to limit or restrain the constitutionally protected freedom of speech," she said.

An angry Pimentel denounced the documentary, "Paglaban sa Kataksilan: 1017," in a privilege speech Tuesday and demanded that Malacañang apologize to him and stop showing the video on government television.

The documentary, which details an alleged plot by military and communist rebels and the opposition to topple the Arroyo administration, shows Pimentel laughing at the foot of the Ninoy Aquino monument in Makati City.

Asked to comment on Pimentel's protest, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the opposition leader could take the matter to court if he felt aggrieved by the video.

"He's a seasoned politician," Bunye added. "He should be able to take as much as ... he dishes out."

Bunye said he had no hand in the documentary's production but added, "We stand by the

information given by the armed forces."

In her statement, Santiago stressed that free speech was a "constitutionally protected right" and any law passed by Congress to limit this would lose the "presumption of constitutionality."

"The state can limit free speech only if the speech presents clear and present danger to national security," she said.

For a speech to meet the test of clear and present danger, the speaker or writer should incite his audience to lawless action, such as taking up arms against the government, or resorting to violence, intimidation, threat, strategy or stealth to overthrow it, she said. On top of this, the audience must have reached the tipping point where it would be ready to take lawless action as a result of the incitement, she added.

"I do not believe that in the case of Senator Pimentel, these two features are present. He has never, as far as I know, incited to taking up arms which is the key feature of rebellion under the Penal Code," Santiago said. With a report from Christine O'Avendano

Looking for another Magsaysay

By Reynaldo Pacheco

(The writer is president of Ang Kapatiran, a platform-based party seeking to reform the Philippine political landscape.)

SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE Philippines has been led by a few truly exceptional, larger-than-life figures. One stands out: Ramon Magsaysay.

He served as Philippine President for only three and a half years in the 1950s, took the country up a long, tough trail, in the process defeating a Huk rebellion, forging strong international alliances and establishing a reputation for incorruptible governance.

Magsaysay's integrity was his hallmark.

Famous and respected

By the time he died 59 years ago today—on March 17, 1957—in a plane crash, he had become one of the most famous and respected leaders in Asia.

Notes historian Carlos Quirino:

"No public figure—not even Dr. Jose Rizal, acclaimed as the greatest hero of the Philippines, or Andres Bonifacio with his plebeian origin, or Manuel L. Quezon, the political wizard of his era—has aroused among Filipinos the same fanatical enthusiasm that Magsaysay did."

Sad to say, most of the national leaders who followed Magsaysay have undone his magnificent work. Some of them, more notorious than others, have done so by stealing, rewarding friends, jailing enemies and generally debasing the national currency and character.

Annual prize

Sadly, today, few Filipinos remember Magsaysay. Very few people know what he stood for.

A famous annual prize awarded to those who do worthy deeds is named after him, but that's about all.

One of the greatest Asians, he has slipped from our national consciousness.

This is a great pity, for it is to Magsaysay that we owe so much more, and it is to him that we should turn for example. It is his spirit that we should invoke in these troubled times.

Magsaysay had his own personal credo, a set of 10 core values that dominated and guided his life. Three of them have particular resonance today:

"I believe that the little man is fundamentally entitled to a little bit more food in his stomach, a little bit more cloth on his back and a little more roof over his head."

"I believe that a high and unwavering sense of morality should pervade all spheres of government activity."

Set example

"I believe that the President should set the example of a big heart, an honest mind, sound instincts, the virtue of healthy impatience and an abiding love for the common man."

The Philippines today is badly in need of men and women in the Magsaysay mold, not officials whose credos go no further than their bank accounts.

This is why Ang Kapatiran, a new national political party registered with the Commission on Elections, is on a nationwide search for servant leaders.

Ang Kapatiran is looking for Filipino citizens who value virtue, duty, good citizenship, transparency and public accountability.

With its platform of clear and specific policy objectives, Ang Kapatiran aims to wipe clean the political slate, to change the political landscape for all time.

In short, we are looking for a new set of men and women, who, like Ramon Magsaysay, believe that government starts at the bottom and moves upward. We invite them to step forward. Now!

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Deadly candor

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A CASE OF TOO DEADLY CANDOR when the military spokesperson, Col. Tristan Ki-son, said that the Armed Forces of the Philippines was "one of the strong pillars holding the nation" and that "if we break, the nation will collapse." The claim borders on the messianic and the megalomaniacal. It would have been all right had the statement come from a demented person. But coming from the spokesperson.

EDITORIAL person of the foremost state instrumentality of power, armed to the teeth and with a dark history of politicization and corruption owing to martial law, the statement is alarming and sounds much like a sly challenge to the foremost principle of republican democracy: civilian authority over the military.

There may be no gainsaying the loyalty of the military brass and rank and file to the chain of command. This has been proven in recent events in which they held themselves together despite apparent tempting offers to engage in adventurism. It could be that there have been invitations from politicians and businessmen for the military to intervene in the current political crisis, but the officers and soldiers by and large have held together. There's a quiet plea on the part of the top brass for politicians to leave the soldiery alone. And the plea should be heeded and respected.

But soldiers should not get funny ideas. They may be a linchpin as far as popular revolts and insurrections are concerned (that seems the lesson of the two EDSA revolutions), but it doesn't mean that they can play god.

Judging from its recent actions and pronouncements, the AFP seems to be flexing its muscles at the cost of civilian supremacy and civil liberties. How could one explain, for example, the threat of the AFP spokesperson to sue this paper for publishing stories on what happened behind the scenes at the height of the attempted coup? And the threat came after the same spokesperson denied there was indeed a coup!

Even lawmakers close to Malacañang, like Rep. Prospero Pichay, have told the military to shut up. And Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez has pointed out that the military had no case since the press was only doing its job of reporting.

But the military remains adamant because Malacañang, the symbol of civilian power over the military, seems either to be egging it on or maybe too weak to even protest. Even after Gonzalez had said that the military had no case, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said that it is up to the military to file a case against this paper. As press officer of the commander in chief, Bunye could have hushed the military spokesperson and instructed him on the whys and wherefores of a free press. But he seems not to dare discipline the spokesperson of an agency that, after all, has an army and an armory.

And why should he? His boss—the commander in chief—had just gone on the air to berate what she called sensational and seditious reporting and to call for "responsible media outlets." Presumably she was making her statements in a station she perceived to be friendly—but lo and behold, the station recently asked the Senate to pass a law removing from the President the power to close down broadcast stations. Apparently, there's a consensus in the press that Malacañang and the military, that it supposedly controls, have become too threatening to the press regime at the cost of the press' prerogatives and its right to inform the public and its freedom of expression.

Even as it allows military spokesmen to shoot their mouth off freely and issue veiled threats or supercilious statements, Malacañang seems to have no appetite for balanced statements coming from its own officials on its emergency powers. Alfredo Benipayo has remained mum on his irrevocable resignation as solicitor general, but it surely is not just coincidence that Malacañang "accepted" his resignation after he made a nuanced defense of Proclamation 1017 at the Supreme Court, arguing that while there might have been flaws in its implementation, its legality is incontestable. This attempt at fine distinction seems unacceptable to Malacañang. Malacañang wants an absolute defense of 1017. It will take no prisoners. Its view is utterly supremacist.

Sadly, the civilian authority has taken on the military fatigues color as readily as a soldier trained to be a killing machine takes to the gun. The civilian authority is turning against itself and the people.



Gov't documentary 'Kataksilan' is libelous

THE ADMINISTRATION KEEPS SAYING THAT there should be "balance" in all media news reports, yet it is the one guilty of "unbalanced" reporting in its documentary "Paglaban sa Kataksilan 1017," which is being shown on all three government television networks (Channels 4, 9 and 13). Compact discs of the same narrative are being distributed all over the country.

I watched the docu twice, and I wondered why a government preaching "balance" in media would produce such a one-sided show. If it were produced or shown by a private media organization, it would be liable for libel, for it libels many prominent personalities, soldiers and civilians alike, accusing them of being coup plotters and subversives.

The docu narrates the alleged "conspiracy" among communists, soldiers and opposition politicians to topple President Macapagal-Arroyo and take over the government. Many prominent personalities were shown and named as among the "conspirators" but they were not allowed to give their side. Everything aired was the side of the administration. In law, this is a clear indication of malice, which is the most important element in the crime of libel.

Among journalists, "balance" is ingrained in their subconscious. It is a reflex action of any reporter or editor to look for the other side. If a reporter fails to do so, the editor tells him to get "the other side" of the story or his story is not good. "Balance" or reporting the other side is written in all the codes of ethics of journalists, so it is not necessary for anybody, least of all the government, to tell them that. Rather, it should tell that to government propagandists, such as those who made "Paglaban sa Kataksilan 1017." For the other side can easily make another docu, titled "Paglaban sa Kasinungalingan."

Since pro-government personalities are libel-happy anyway, the "Barasan 5" may as well give them a dose of their own medicine and file libel charges against the Malacañang propaganda arm and the three government channels for showing the docu.

WHEN HISTORY'S VILLAINS DIE, WE GRIEVE that they didn't live long enough to be punished. Yet no punishment can really restore what they have taken from their victims' lives, and no penalty can match the pain they have caused. To top it all, to execute a war criminal is to shortchange ourselves twice. We dwarf justice by taking one miserable life to recompense for the loss of martyred thousands. Worse, we betray our ideals by proving ourselves capable of the inhumanity we so despise in the enemy.

When I took part in drafting the Rome Statute to establish the International Criminal Court, the list of crimes punishable by the court jarred one's trust in humanity. The macabre list aimed to capture the "state of the art" in new forms of indignities and aszuhs. The Philippine and Latin American contribution was "enforced disappearance"—"salvaging" for us, despoiler for the Americas. For us and other Asian countries, they added "sexual slavery" and "enforced prostitution," the lawyers' tortured attempt to capture the agony of the comfort women. For the Yugoslavian conflict, it was "forced pregnancy," where genocidal beasts, not satisfied with raping their victims, ensured that the victim gave birth to mixed-blood progeny, aiming at the eventual "cleansing" of the victim's bloodlines. It was sick and sickening.

Slobodan Milosevic, the "Butcher of the Balkans," masterminded and embodied that evil. He was the president of Yugoslavia when it launched its ethnic cleansing against breakaway Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo. He was the first head of state called to answer for war crimes. He was indicted for the infamous 1995 slaughter of 8,000 Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica. He couldn't be arrested until he was voted out of office in 2001, and the successor government surrendered him to the tribunal. Upon his arrest, the prosecutor found a very thin dossier against him. Apparently investigators hadn't bothered to build the case because they had little hope that he would ever be arrested to stand trial.

As I See It



Neal H. Cruz

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. is justified in complaining that he has been libeled by being labeled as an "enemy of the state" in the docu. From a person who held the microphone for GMA while she took her oath of office as President at Edsa in 2001 to an "enemy of the state" is indeed a big comedown.

Enemy of the state? Not me, said Pimentel. "If there is an enemy of the state in this country, it is none other than that lady who is pretending to be the President of this country in Malacañang. She is the enemy of the state."

As if that were not enough, and the recall of Proclamation 1017 notwithstanding, Malacañang keeps threatening journalists with arrests and prosecution. In the latest threat, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye warned that "journalists would not be accorded any special treatment in the crackdown against those suspected to be engaged in destabilization."

If journalists are expecting any special treatment! The Arroyo administration has already shown that it is worse than the Marcos martial law regime in trying to repress not only media but also the whole citizenry. So what special treatment can we journalists expect from it?

Nevertheless, I don't think the threats scare any journalist. To be arrested by this administration for telling the truth is a "badge of honor." And history will judge the actions of both the journalists and the administration that persecutes them.

And here's another contradiction: Is still another threat intended to scare journalists,

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that he was investigating the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) for violation of the anti-wiretapping law by posting on its website the "Hello Garcí" tapes purporting to show that fraud marked the May 2004 presidential elections. (Why is the administration so touchy about the "Hello Garcí" tapes? Why is it so afraid of them?)

But as the PCIJ pointed out, the same tapes had been played in Congress and by Bunye himself in Malacañang. So how can publishing it in its website be a violation of the law? Isn't that only factual reporting?

Sen. Ralph Recto cited still another contradiction: "To a large extent, this government rode on the coattails of the (PCIJ) exposés on the alleged Erap mansions," he said, referring to the series of PCIJ stories about the lifestyles of deposed President Erap and his mistresses. "Those in the opposition then were applauding the PCIJ's sleuthing. But now that they're in power, they would like to put in prison the very same people they once put on the pedestal."

The Arroyo administration is a beneficiary of the PCIJ's "intrepid reporting," Recto added. "But when the same journalistic standards that the PCIJ had adhered to through the years were used in scrutinizing the new government, those with new-found powers abhorred the exercise of a right they no longer age extolled."

Recto said that during Erap's time, Erap would merely throw a tantrum every time the PCIJ came out with an investigative story unflattering to his administration. "But (the Arroyo) administration (now) wants to throw the whole PCIJ staff in jail," he said.

TODAY'S JOKE. Lawyer to witness: "Is it true you accepted a bribe of P1 million?" Witness does not answer. Judge: "Please answer the question." Witness: "Ay, sorry, judge. I thought he was asking you."

Milosevic: A death unmourned

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

Critics have called them "show trials," valuable for their symbolic rather than legal value. They provide catharsis and bring closure to painful periods in a nation's life. They give the victims' families a chance to vindicate their pain, by confirming their loss and affirming that the accused is wicked and the community indignant. But that purpose is "exemplary" (i.e., to make an example of the evil one), and at best "restorative" (i.e., to make the victim or his kin whole again), rather than "punitive" (i.e., to punish the guilty and make them pay).

The breakup of Yugoslavia and the assertiveness of the Serbs, the dominant ethnic group, should remind us that our peace is fragile, and that it doesn't take much for our civilized lives to unravel. It took a charismatic leader to unleash the genocidal monster lurking within each Serb nationalist, letting loose neighbor against neighbor, co-workers against each other. He was "both the pyromaniac and the fireman." He creates disorder and ... convince[s] people only he can resolve it."

In recent Asian history, Pol Pot holds the record closest to Milosevic's in exterminating entire populations. He too died before a court could convict him, indeed even before the Khmer Rouge tribunal could be set up, having been delayed by the maneuverings of local politicians linked to the old order. In Phnom Penh some time back, I saw a film depicting Pol Pot's last moments: the corpse of the once all-powerful ruler was ingloriously wrapped in blankets, then brought to a makeshift funeral pyre to be cremated in a backyard farm. No grand ceremony, none of the paeans that Brother Number One ritually heard while he reigned.

Such as things are, for Slobodan Milosevic, it is sentence enough to die "unloved, unwanted and unmourned," for how truly can be rest in peace? That should remind today's aspiring tyrants in our land. Power intoxicates but beware history's hangover.

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

OPINION

AUS

RP getting closer to a police state

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS, FOLLOWING the aborted Feb. 24 coup attempt, have put President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration in a total war mode with the Philippine media and its perceived enemies, including those on the military Right and on the Left.

Last Sunday, the President said she was still battling "residual" threats against the government. While reassuring the country that her government was "one step ahead of the enemies of the state," the President warned: "We are fully aware that some groups have not ceased in their attempts to undermine democracy." She then directed the police and the military "to expose all residual and anticipated threats of destabilization even as we push normalization."

The statement hardly reassured the public that the regime is in control of a repressive military, although the coup has been nipped in the bud. There are concerns that, in the aftermath of the lifting of the state of national emergency, the military has emerged as the main threat to constitutional democracy and that the government has increasingly become hostage to the military which has enhanced its veto power during the emergency.

There is heightened concern in civil society that after the government resorted to emergency powers, it has become necessary for it to keep in place the mechanisms of police power to ensure regime survival. Thus, the country has now moved dangerously close to the threshold of becoming a police state, or a military dictatorship.

As the President renewed her warning to the media to exercise "responsibility" in reporting news on coups, a new threat to the media emerged from the military. The spokesperson of the Armed Forces denounced post-coup newspaper reporting that pictured the military in a state of disarray, with the involvement of some of its senior officers in the plot to overthrow the government, in an alleged conspiracy with the leftists and mainstream opposition politicians seeking to

install a "transition council"—a euphemism for a civilian-military junta—to run the country in case the President was toppled on Feb. 24.

The media are even more nervous about the continuing crackdown than they were on Feb. 24, when Proclamation 1017 was issued. These fears were heightened by threats aired by the military that it would file either criminal libel or sedition charges against sections of the press for publishing reports that "portrayed a different story compared to those that actually and truthfully transpired within the AFP in the days prior to the declaration of a state of national emergency." The military spokesperson not only denounced as "without basis" newspaper reports that the coup plotters sought to replace Ms Arroyo with a caretaker government to be headed by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga. The spokesperson also charged that the series of articles were part of the plot by "unseen hands and puppet masters ... to divide the military" in an attempt to oust Ms Arroyo.

With this intervention, the media now face two enemies: the government and the military, which have coalesced to gang up on the media.

The double-barreled threat was magnified the other day when Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez told reporters that his office was investigating the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism for possible violation of the anti-wiretapping law when it posted on its website the Garciliano tapes that purported to show fraud in the May 2004 election. Gonzalez also said that the government had a watch list of journalists engaged

in "sedition" activities.

At the Senate hearing last Tuesday on the harassment of journalists and curtailment of press freedom, PCJ officials revealed that the police last Monday tried, but failed, to obtain search warrants from a Quezon City regional trial court. The warrants would have allowed the police to raid and search offices of the PCJ to collect evidence to support charges of inciting to sedition.

The government stepped up its continuing post-coup pressure on the press with the warning made by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye that journalists would not receive "special treatment." In a mealy-mouthed double-speak, Bunye said that while the government would honor the basic rights of the press, "the press is not a target of censorship, but some members of the press have been charged with violations of the law and shall be prosecuted just like any ordinary citizen."

The statement is gratuitous and misrepresents press freedoms toward cases filed against its members. Historically, the press has never sought special treatment from the courts. Its members have submitted to judicial process in cases involving criminal libel complaints, as well as those involving political offenses relating to national security. The brief of the press is that the constitutional rights of its members to exercise their freedoms be respected by government. It seeks no more than this.

In being critical of the government, the press does not seek and expect concessions from the government. Too often, the exercise of this right is mistaken as involvement in sedition acts. The line separating criticism of government actions from sedition activity against the state is extremely blurred. In this particular situation, the process becomes arbitrary, with the government seizing the initiative in determining what is responsible and irresponsible journalism, and what is seditious or not.

the traffic and, more irksomely, his march to a great future.

(Rarely have I come across so eloquent a pitch for indifference... give it to Austero, he can be so eloquent when so angry.)

I'm angry, too. Well, unlike him I'm not middle-class. I used to be, although I work in a private company, with a salary equal to, if not more than, that of the generals and Cabinet members. But I am hard-up these days. I have barely enough to feed my family, send three children to school and pay for my house rent. Unlike Austero, I am wallowing in debt, having effectively loaned the retirement benefits that I have yet to receive just to provide my family a decent existence. With barely enough to sustain my family, I am forced to live a life of austerity (no pun intended) bordering on poverty. No, I'm not angry at Austero. I'm angry about all the lying, cheating, stealing and, now, the fascism of his president.

Let him live his life and sleep the sleep of the blind, deaf and dumb. But, please, tell him not to tell me (or threaten me or violently stop me, as his president's minions are doing) from going to the streets to fight for the truth, to protest lying, cheating and stealing by an impostor in government, to oppose oppression because it is hindering a great future of peace for him.

And please tell him not to stop me from thinking and saying he's a fool for allowing his president to make him a fool. This is my right, although he and his president may think otherwise.

Let me refer him to the words of Elie Wiesel, a Nobel Peace Prize winner: "Two subjects. We fight hatred. There should be a biblical commandment: Thou shall not hate." And then there is indifference. Everyone can fall into this trap. It's so easy to enter into indifference and stay there. An indifferent person remains indifferent unless shaken up." I hope this shakes him up.

I have an unsolicited word of counsel for him, if he cares to listen. He does not have to sleep and play blind, deaf and dumb to achieve the kind of peace he envisions. It is already within his reach. He can find it in North Korea and Cuba and China.

nomic sovereignty on the block.

Thaksin's days appear numbered, for Thailand seems poised to eject a popularly elected prime minister. The number of street protesters has swelled from five digits to six. His predicament illustrates the common dictum in the politics of developing countries where rural electorates elect governments but urban elites get to throw them out.

Indeed, the anti-Thaksin coalition will settle for no less than his ouster from office, permanent banishment from Thai politics, and possibly exile. But the opposition has decided to boycott the snap election, which the TRT would likely win again by a large margin, because Thaksin has captured and manipulated the institutions established by the constitution to safeguard against graft and uphold separation of powers within the state.

Thai politics has thus reached an impasse. Only intervention by King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who is widely revered, seems capable of saving the day.

In a fiercely contested battle between Thaksin and his opponents, King Bhumibol is the fundamental difference between Thailand and the Philippines, where "people power" revolts regularly undermine and sometimes overthrow presidents. The King's intervention would put an unconditional stop to the street confrontations.

But the Thai people cannot afford to look to their aging and ailing King every time they have a problem. Moreover, a royal intervention would risk returning Thailand to square one, seeking to rewrite its constitution to remedy the shortcomings of its democratic culture.

What Thai democracy needs in order to mature is not a political safety net, but a vigilant citizenry to ensure disciplined enforcement of the constitution's provisions and institutions, so that they can no longer be hijacked by the likes of a Thaksin.

Project Syndicate

Why Filipino (2)

I'M HERE IN CEBU WHERE, EARLIER THIS MORNING, I met Aurora Gov. Bellafior Angara-Castillo, who mentioned that they needed to produce health education materials in different local languages. I was surprised and asked, "But isn't Aurora a Tagalog province?" The governor had to explain that the province now has numerous migrants, mainly Ilocano, but now also including people from as far as the Visayas.

That conversation highlighted just one of the many problems that come from our lack of a national language. Even worse, we seem to be moving backwards, what with the recent Department of Education findings that high school seniors' proficiency in Filipino drastically dropped over the last few years.

Last Wednesday, I looked into our long history of neglecting the development of a national language. We seem to associate Filipino and our other languages with poverty and backwardness. Accompanying this linguistic inferiority complex is an over-valuation of English, which we think provides the key to national development, mainly to export more Filipino workers.

I'd question that assumption, and argue that our neglect of Filipino and our unrealistic expectations of English decrease our competitiveness in the global market.

Nationalism

Our more economically developed neighbors rightly recognize the need to balance nationalism with globalism, and this is reflected in their language policies. In the post-colonial period after World War II, many developing countries pushed hard to craft a national language.

Some countries, like Thailand, were more fortunate because they already had a common language spoken by most of its citizens. Others, like Indonesia and the Philippines, had a more daunting task because of great linguistic diversity. Indonesia was, however, able to develop Bahasa Indonesia while we lagged behind in our development of Filipino.

Some of the reasons for a national language were quite practical: you needed a common language for education, public health, agriculture, industry.

But the most important reason for developing a national language was that of developing a national identity that transcended class, caste, ethnicity, religion. It was important to have a common language to tell the story of a nation, and pass this from one generation to another. And, with time, our neighbors began as well to develop fine literature, written in the national language, capturing the dynamism, the exuberance, as well as the anguish and angst, of national life.

Globalism

A nationalistic policy toward language did not mean xenophobia. Japanese, for example, is peppered with borrowed English words, from home furnishings to high-tech jargon. The Chinese, on the other hand, drew on existing words to describe the wonders of the new technologies: the train is a "fire horse," a computer an "electric brain."

Gradually, our neighbors began to use their national language to open the world to their citizens. Visit bookstores in China, Indonesia or Thailand, and you'll find hundreds of books—the world's finest literature, as well as computer manuals, self-improvement books, textbooks in the social and natural sciences—translated into the local national language.

These countries have come to accept the importance of English and other languages of the world and encourage citizens to learn these languages, through their national language. In a Thai bookstore, you'll find Thai-English, Thai-Japanese, Thai-Chinese, Thai-French dictionaries, to name a few, both in book and electronic forms, the latter with speech synthesizers so you hear the proper pronunciation of foreign words.

Again, the reasons for doing this are very utilitarian: you learn a foreign language not because it's required but because it serves a purpose, often related to national development. So when the Chinese learn English, it's to be able to read the original technical books, or to communicate with visiting technicians. Their goal is to plug into the world to reap its benefits for the home country.

No wonder the West is running scared—the Japanese did it, the Chinese are doing it now, using just enough English (or German, or French) to learn new skills and technologies, which they then copy, often with great improvements.

Talking back

What's happening in the Philippines? We've neglected Filipino and our other languages. Only recently did we recognize that maybe the way to go in schools is to have the local language (e.g., Cebano) used in the first years of primary school to teach Filipino and other basic subjects, including, for older kids, English.

And even as we laughed at our neighbors for their resistance to English, our own proficiency in that language has stagnated. I often suspect we're not actually seeing a deterioration of English in the Philippines. What's happened is that for most Filipinos, the level of English has remained pretty much the same from the colonial period, just enough to understand the instructions of the boss. Which is why we had such a perfect fit for a particular segment of the overseas labor market.

Now that new opportunities are emerging, such as in the call centers, we're realizing we don't have enough Filipinos who can speak English in a more interactive way, offering information and advice. And when it comes to the most lucrative high-paying jobs and consultancies, we have only a handful of Filipinos who have the ability to analyze problems in English, and to propose and explain solutions.

To capture that market, it won't be enough to just learn English. Filipinos have to be able to use the language spoken at home and bring this to tackle the complexities of the outside world. But since we neglected both Filipino and English in our schools, we have many young Filipinos who just can't communicate.

I despair over the way UP students grapple for words: "Kasi, sir, you know, the one of the *ano* is, well, you know it's all very complex." Alas, at the rate we're going, we won't need English or Tagalog. We'll need to teach mind-reading in schools.

Proficient neither in Filipino nor English, our worlds will remain limited. We will continue to export Filipinos, but mainly in low-paying service occupations. At home, we suffer too from not being able to develop science and technology, so we end up buying other countries' consumer products.

As we search for solutions to our national aphasia, we might heed the advice of Mahatma Gandhi, who once said Indians have to learn Hindi to speak with each other, and English to speak to the world. I would say we should go for as many languages as possible so we can discover the world, but meantime, let's develop our own languages, too, and our sense of identity, so we can indeed speak with the world, and not just be spoken to. It all boils down to a simple matter of respecting ourselves, so that when the world talks to us, we can talk back.

'Moral lynching' and indifference

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

cused to prove her innocence.

Second, Austero's threshold for truth and justice must indeed be very high. The evidence for cheating, stealing and lying is staring him in the face, but (he) still refuses to believe. If this critical mass of evidence doesn't quite convince him, nothing will. He pivots on this issue by pointing out to other traps. For sure many of these traps, including those in the opposition, have indulged in similar practices. But these are not the issues at the moment. The issue is GMA.

Finally, man is not only a political, social, economic animal; he's first and foremost a moral man.

HERE'S Andrade's piece:

"I never like to be lied to by a girlfriend or agent and certainly not the president ..." That's not me talking about Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, that's Burt Bacharach talking about US President George W. Bush

S.C. Austero and his kind blame the reaction but not the stimulus. They see everything wrong in the effect but not in the cause. They're... people complaining about a tree's dying but not caring that its roots are rotting

Obviously, Austero doesn't mind being lied to or made a fool by his president. And he is angry at those who mind and stubbornly insist that his president should be held accountable for lying, cheating and stealing. When criticized for being indifferent, he lashes back at the critics, accusing them in effect of "moral bigotry." And the more he sees red because the "moral bigots" around him are not only criticizing them but also obstructing

Nice try, but this doesn't hold water. This is the pitfall of arguing by analogy.

The critics (myself included) of GMA are, for the most part, after truth and justice. But such efforts are frustrated at every turn. In normal circumstances and in law, the burden of proof falls on the accuser. However, if the accused uses the full machinery of the government to block the search for truth within the parameters of law and the Constitution, it's not unreasonable to assume that the accused has something to hide. If not guilty, in this instance, the burden of proof, to my mind, falls on the ac-

cusation.

FIRST, Mr. Austero is quite adept at manipulating language to serve his purposes. I refer to his use of "moral lynching." It is not that he simply stumbled on this phrase. It's possibly quite deliberate. He wants to conjure the imagery of physical lynching as we know it: putting a rope around a man's neck, hanging and jerking up on a tree until the man's neck snaps... Or, tying a man's feet, connecting him to a truck and dragging him in the street or open field. The idea is to evoke revulsion at such barbarity.

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Even a Grade I pupil knows the meaning of 'best'

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO SAID THAT SHE IS THE "BEST PRESIDENT" AT THIS TIME FOR 84 MILLION FILIPINOS. WHAT MADE HER SAY THAT, I WONDER?

A Grade I pupil would know what "best" means. Somebody who is best would not steal, would not lie and would not arrest people without a reason.

The "best President" would not steal. The Senate agriculture and the blue ribbon com-

mittees have concluded that President Arroyo should be made accountable for the "premeditated, systematic and agricultural theft" of the P728-million fertilizer fund. This fund was released just before the 2004 elections and is believed to have been diverted to ensure Ms Arroyo's electoral victory.

The "best President" would not lie. Ms Arroyo's lawyer, Jesus Santos, denied that First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo ever went to Marawi City during the 2004 elections with P500 million. A senior Marine officer said that's a lie. Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani testified before a Senate committee that Mike Arroyo went to Marawi City and distributed funds to election officials in 2004. The Marines should know since they provided Mr. Arroyo security.

And what about the Gerci tapes? The "best President" would not arrest people without reason. After issuing Proclamation 1017, Ms Arroyo ordered the arrest of Rep. Crispin Beltran on a 1985 charge. President Cory Aquino released all political prisoners after Edsa 1986 and ordered the dismissal of politically motivated cases against anti-Marcos activists. Thus, there is no more ground for the arrest and detention of Beltran now.

I assume a Grade I pupil would wonder why Ms Arroyo calls herself the "best president" for our country in this time of crisis.

—AURORA A. PARONG, M.D.,

former executive director,
Task Force Detainees of the Philippines,
1101 H. Cortez, Sta. Lucia Village,
Wireless, Mandaue City

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Who should be jailed?

CRISPIN BELTRAN, AGE 73, WAS ARRESTED and is detained by the police because of an old charge of "rebellion" that dates back 20 years. Imelda Marcos, on the other hand, has never been arrested or thrown in jail for the crimes she has been accused of. She even rubs elbows with the President. There were those who say that she will never see the inside of a jail cell because of her age. Between Beltran and Marcos, shouldn't the latter be the one in jail?—Trennie Monsod, Quezon City (via e-mail)

VOICES ON
INQ7.NET

I think Mike Defensor got it right when he suggested that the way to settle the Liberal Party squabble would be to have a new election. This is indeed a brilliant idea, since this will forever settle any dispute as to who the real leader is in the Liberal Party and avoid skirmishes in and outside of the court.

Now, I would like Defensor, following the same line of reasoning, to suggest to the President the same solution for all the squabbles going on in the country. An election should be called at once to settle the issue of leadership.

As it is, GMA cannot concentrate because she is busy defending the legitimacy of her presidency.—Teck Uy, Canada (via e-mail)

I hope I'm not the only one who is in favor of Proclamation 1017. Ever wonder why the peso was almost gaining 20 centavos a day but gained only 4 centavos the day the proclamation was lifted? Ever wonder why the stock market continued to gain points during the same week, only to drop some points that Friday?

No matter what the economists say, Proclamation 1017 gained the trust of investors. It showed that we have a President that can handle every possible situation.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not pro-administration. I am pro-reason and sensibility. It's about time someone imposed a little restriction on our freedom—freedom that is abused by a lot of people, especially the politicians who claim to be "for the people" and irresponsible journalists who claim to expose the truth. (Tell me, does anyone know the real truth?)—Paul Santos, Parañaque City (via e-mail)

When my students at Ateneo watched "Batas Militar" last week, from their very own lips came these observations: that both President Marcos and President Macapagal-Arroyo were bent on moving to a parliamentary system of government; that both presidents were hiding their draconian measures under the cloak of the Constitution; that both presidents were trampling on civil liberties; that both presidents were muzzling the media.

Like in Rizal's prologue to the magnificent "Noli Me Tangere," the shroud covering the face has fallen and revealed Ms Arroyo as she really is. With no mandate from the people because she cheated in the last election and with the world crumbling around her, she is resorting to the tactics of the desperate. In the end, she is shown for what she really is: a woman without power because empty and hollow, filled with nothing else but straw.

Again and again, in our classes in Drama, we remind the students of what the Greek dramatists said: "They whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad."—Danton R. Remoto (via e-mail)

It is time for unity for the good of the Filipino people. Stop attacking the government. Give GMA a chance!

Kami rito sa ibang bansa, nagnatrabaho kahit ikaw ang kuya namin dahil sa paglakas ng peso. Kami'y nakikusa para sa ikukoganda ng Pilipinas.—Romeo L. Bordallo Jr., Kuwait (via e-mail)



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Proimpeach gov sacked as RDC head



KALINGA FEAST

A child awaits his turn to take part in a performance during a recent festival in Lubuagan, Kalinga.

ROUNDUP

Army uniforms banned

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Police have banned the use of military uniforms among civilians in the province, saying crime suspects usually use these in their operations. Supt. Jane Binayug, Cagayan police information officer, said statements from crime or abuse victims showed that suspects behind robbery, burglary and murder cases usually use military uniforms so victims would think that they were government soldiers or policemen.

Estanislao Calder, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Catechist suffers landslide loss

SAN PABLO CITY—The Diocese of San Pablo here has extended its sympathies to its long-time catechist Juliet Gramatico, whose 21 relatives in Guinsaugon, Southern Leyte were among those missing and feared dead. Gramatico, a catechist of the San Vicente Ferrer Parish in Barangay Mamalid, Cabuyao, Laguna, said the victims included the families of two of her siblings. In a report to the Presbyterial council meeting, Fr. Bong Vega, parish priest of St. Bernard, was quoted as saying that Guinsaugon used to be an economically progressive village with three rice mills, big houses and a good number of motorcycles, cars and vans before it was buried in the landslide.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NPA member slain

LUCENA CITY—Government soldiers killed a suspected New People's Army rebel in an encounter in a remote village in Sta. Cruz town in Occidental Mindoro on Wednesday. A military report identified the slain communist guerrilla as a certain Ka Damon. "We have brought the body to the local police station for identification," Lt. Col. Elmer Quiroz, commander of the Army's 80th Infantry Battalion, said.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

I dead in armed robbery

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—An employee of a courier company was killed while another was seriously wounded when four armed robbers in two motorcycles held them up and took P3 million in cash in Batangas City on Tuesday. Reynaldo Mendoza, an employee of the AFM Delivery Company, and his cousin, driver Romulo Mendoza, were in a van after withdrawing money from a bank when the suspects blocked their path in Barangay Banaba South at 3 p.m. The suspects, all armed with .45-cal. pistols, shot the victims repeatedly. Two of the gunmen entered the van and took the bag containing the money.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

DAR launches project

THE DEPARTMENT of Agrarian Reform recently launched a P5.3 million infrastructure project in Atok, Benguet. The DAR, through Undersecretary Gerundio Maduro, distributed 197 land titles to farmers in Poblacion and Galikin in Benguet.

Archivists hold workshop

THE SOCIETY of Filipino Archivists (SFA) Inc., in coordination with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), will hold a seminar-workshop on "Preservation Management: Setting Up a Preservation Program for Libraries and Archives" on April 3-5 at the Grand Manseng Hotel, Davao City. The venue of the workshop is in keeping with the NCCA's program of focusing training and development in Mindanao. For further information, please call Emma Rey (931-5966) or Emile Calonge (932-7185).



TREE SOLDIER

Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn (right) and Rear Adm. Tirso Dangin, Western Command chief, plant a mangrove sapling to commemorate the Wescom's 36th anniversary recently.

Militants dare govt: Arrest us

DAVAO CITY—Militant leaders here said they will face the government's crackdown against them head on even as eight of their leaders have been included in the charge sheet filed by operatives of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Manila Monday against Bayan-Muna Rep. Joel Virador.

"The protest will continue even with the looming arrest. We will no be threatened by it and we will not hide ... we will face their attacks head on," said Ariel Casilao of Karapatan.

As if to show that they can not be silenced by any threat of arrest, various militant groups even staged a rally in front of the City Police Office here Tuesday.

Casilao said at least eight leaders of various militant groups have been tagged as conspirators of Virador in attempts to topple down the government of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Charged with conspiring to rebellion were Casilao, Editha "Inday" Duterte of Kadamay, Omar Bantayan of Kilusang Mayo Uno, Luz Ilangan of Gabriela (also a professor at the Ateneo de Davao University), Jeppie Ramada of Bayan Muna, Tomyng Flores of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Cora Espinosa of Samakan, and Lorrie Ann Cascaro of AnakBayan youth sector.

Virador was arrested by plainclothes operatives of the CIDG just as he was booking for a flight for Manila last month. Casilao said it was Virador who informed them about the inclusion of their names in the charge sheet.

During the protest in front of the police office, Supt. Jose Pante, CIDG commander for Davao, approached the group apparently to assure that no order of arrest has been transmitted to them yet from the national office. Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO removed South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Avance-Fuentes as chair of the Regional Development Council (RDC) for Central Mindanao in a move that was seen as a retaliation for the governor's support of Ms Arroyo's impeachment.

Hajja Sitte Mariam Lum, director of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) in the region, said that in an order dated Jan. 25, Ms Arroyo named Koronadal City Mayor Fernando Miguel as the new RDC chair.

Lum said the President cited "presidential decision" for the change in the RDC leadership.

She said the order was only transmitted to her office on Feb. 22; its implementation was delayed pending efforts to verify its authenticity.

Fuentes, who supported the impeachment move against Ms Arroyo, was named co-chair but she declined the position.

Fuentes said she was no longer surprised by the President's move to replace her as RDC chair.

She said the moment she and fellow National People's Coalition (NPC) stalwart South Cotabato Rep. Arthur Pingoy decided to support the impeachment move against Ms Arroyo, "we anticipated that we will have to pay for it."

"When I was called two years ago to lead the RDC, I accepted it and tried my best to deliver. Now that the President has decided that my time is up, then I should go. But I will still help the RDC as a member," she said.

Explaining her decision not to accept the council's co-chairmanship, Fuentes said she did not want to create confusion in the RDC.

"The co-chair position is intended for the representative of the private sector based on the rules governing the organizational structure of the RDCs in the country," she said.

The RDC is composed of representatives from government agencies, private groups and local chief executives of the provinces of South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sarangani, Sultan Kudarat and the cities of Cotabato, General Santos, Koronadal, Tacurong and Kidapawan.

Like other RDCs, its task is to draft proposals for the development of its member areas.

Aquiles Zonti, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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CONSTRUCTION TECHNICAL SEMINARS

SEMINAR ROOM 1 March 16, 2006 (Thursday)
2:00pm - 4:00pm

TOPIC A: Impact of R-VAT on the Construction Industry by Aly Vic Mamaleo (PCA Tax Consultant)

March 17, 2006 (Friday)
1:30pm - 3:30pm

National Building Code & its Impact on the Construction Industry (by Anch. Menor Cantaya)

TOPIC B: 4:00pm - 6:00pm

A Symposium in PCA Rules and Regulation by Ramon Aladio (PCA Board Member)

TOPIC C: 4:00pm - 6:00pm

A Symposium in PCA Rules and Regulation by Ramon Aladio (PCA Board Member)

All seat allocations are on a "first come, first serve basis". Attendees will be given priority.

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Urinating
in public
unlawful;
but...

LIGAZPI CITY—
Provincial Board member Ramon Fernandez Jr. has chided the city police force for failing to implement the ordinance of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Albay prohibiting urinating in public in this city.

In an inspection he conducted on Tuesday evening of the crowded food and drink stalls along Rosario and Vinzons Streets within the Albany Capitol Complex here, Fernandez found that a lot of male customers urinate along corners of nearby government buildings and dimly-streets.

Fernandez, who sponsored the ordinance, lamented that it was never enforced by the city police since it took effect on May 12, 1999.

Reminder

He said the provincial board even passed a resolution in October last year requesting the provincial director and police chiefs in Albay to enforce Ordinance No. 99-007, otherwise known as An Ordinance Prohibiting All Persons from Urinating in All Public Places and Providing Penalties for Violations Thereof," as a reminder.

Supt. Narciso Guarin, city police chief, claimed that the ordinance was defective since the provincial government can merely install toilets in strategic areas to address the problem.

Guarin was quoted by Fernandez as saying in a radio interview that his policemen would be placed in a bad light if they strictly enforced the ordinance.

"Who is he to declare an ordinance to be defective," Fernandez asked. "While we in the (provincial board) were elected to legislate and make laws, the police are mandated to enforce them (laws)."

The ordinance seeks to preserve the comfort and convenience of the Albayanos by maintaining clean air in public and private places, streets and surroundings.

Penalties

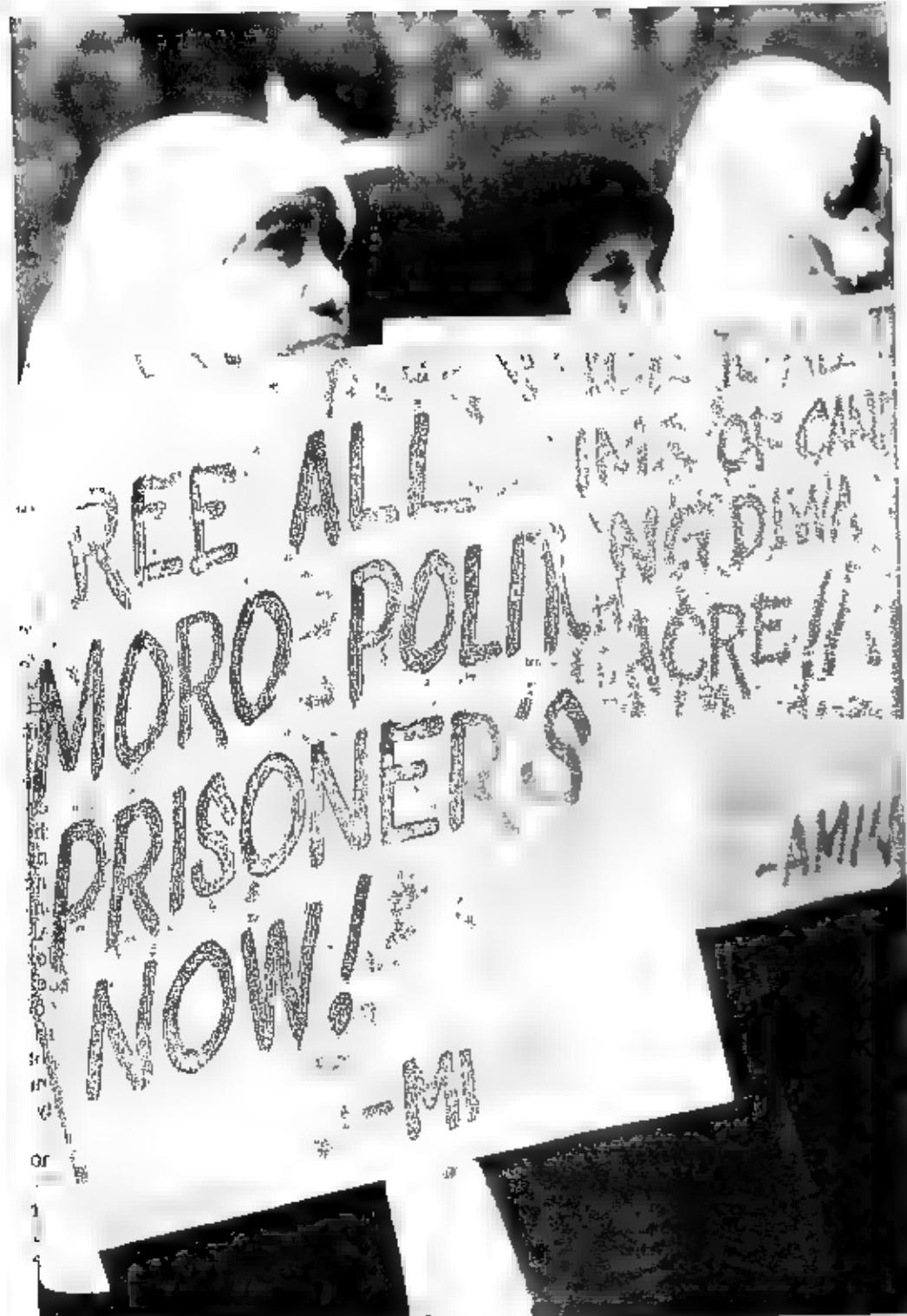
Violators of the ordinance are subject to penalties of fine and imprisonment or both.

For the first offense, a fine of P200 or four hours of community service, is imposed at the option of the offender.

For the second offense, imprisonment of 10 days or a fine not exceeding P700 await offenders.

For the third offense, imprisonment of 10 days or a fine not exceeding P1,000 or both awaits offenders. Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Muslim leaders urge release of Nur Misuari



MUSLIM women display their placards calling for justice during a protest March 16 at the office of the Human Rights Commission in Quezon City. The protesters were seeking justice for their relatives killed during an aborted jailbreak at a maximum prison facility led by suspected Abu Sayyaf members.

COTABATO CITY—MUSLIM LEADERS in Mindanao, including a ranking official of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), reiterated an appeal to government for the immediate release of Moro National Liberation Front chair Nur Misuari, saying his freedom will boost government's peace venture in Mindanao.

Abdul Syed Lingga, executive director of the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies, said if the government cannot decide on Misuari's rebellion case, the former governor of Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao should be allowed to post bail.

The position of Muslims in Mindanao is that Misuari should be released. Justice delayed, justice denied. Until now, nothing's happened to the case of Misuari," Lingga said.

MILF vice chair Hatimil Hassan, also ARMM Regional Legislative Assembly speaker, said lawmakers in the provinces of Maguindanao, Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-tawi, Lanao del Sur and Marawi City want Misuari out of jail.

MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal said the organization still sees Misuari as one of the leaders of the Bangsamoro people.

"We are Muslims. We want that he will be freed from any harm. Misuari's freedom will also boost the ongoing peace talks," Iqbal said.

At the same time, Iqbal announced the resumption next week of the stalled talks.

"There is a signal already from Malaysia regarding the resumption of talks next week," Iqbal said.

"Both parties will discuss the implementing guidelines of the ancestral domain," he added.

Kuala Lumpur has postponed the re-

sumption of formal peace talks due to recent political crisis in Manila.

In 1996, the government offered limited autonomy to the Moro National Liberation Front, in exchange for peace. But the MILF, which was formed from a disgruntled MNLF faction, said autonomy was insufficient.

Reports of a coup within its ranks recently hounded the MILF with the brother of the late MILF leader Hashim Salama being mentioned as the coup leader.

But Eid Kabatu, MILF spokesperson, said Samir Hashim, the group's 108th Brigade commander, was recuperating from partial paralysis following a mild stroke last year.

"(So) there is no truth to that (coup attempt report)," Kabatu said.

Musnip Abdullah, commander of the MILF's 106th Brigade, earlier said that an attempt to overthrow MILF chair Ibrahim Murad was thwarted

when he deployed his forces in Barangay Pidsandawan here a few days ago.

Abdullah, also known as Commander Adan, later said the move to unseat Murad turned out to be a false alarm.

Mike Mamintal, a member of the local ceasefire monitoring team, said the assembly by Commander Wahid Tundok's men in Pidsandawan was brought before the attention of the International Monitoring Team (IMT). Tundok is an ally of Hashim.

Mamintal said Tundok had told the IMT and local officials about a brewing territorial dispute between his group and Abdulah's forces in Barangay Kaya-Kaya in Datu Saudi Ampatuan town in Maguindanao.

Mamintal said Tundok claimed he wanted to express peacefully his people's sentiment. Jeffrey Mattem and Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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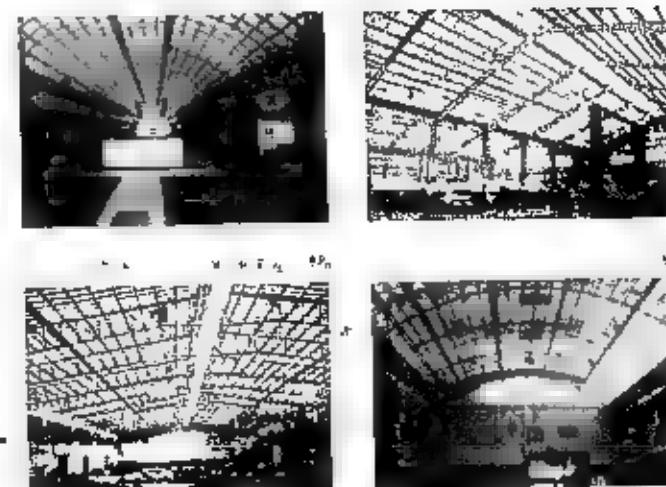
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RP: From exporter of coffee to importer

TAGUM CITY, DAVAO DEL NORTE — From being coffee exporter in the 18th century, the Philippines has since become dependent on the import of the commodity for its brew.

The country has about 74,000 hectares of coffee plantations, but only 400 kilograms of coffee beans per hectare are being produced, a far cry from Vietnam's average of about 2,000 kilograms per hectare.

This is what Nestle Philippine Inc. is trying to overturn.

Nestle, which has recently launched a new coffee brand, has started a drive to revive the country's

ailing coffee industry and boost production of the crop.

"We are practically doing everything we can to help the farmers," Glicerio Joel Lumagbas, head of Nestle's agricultural services, said.

Lumagbas said one effort that Nestle is doing is the holding of seminars to teach coffee farmers new technology on how to increase production.

Currently, about 5,000 coffee stakeholders had attended the seminars, including the recent one conducted at the 16-hectare Nestle Farm in Magdum Village here.

Conon Alenton, Nestle's resident

agronomist here, said what they teach in the workshops are the modern and best farming and harvesting methods.

Most of the coffee farmers in the country, he said, do not have formal training and only rely on traditional methods.

"There is a lot of coffee demand," Lumagbas said of both domestic and global demands.

Richard Peñalosa, Nestle's brand manager, said with Nestle establishing buying stations around the country, farmers have been assured of a market for their produce. Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Manila-Vigan flights planned

VIGAN CITY—THE SELDOM-USUSED AIRSTRIP in Barangay Mindoro here will soon be expanded as a local businessman is determined to set up the first Manila-Vigan flight for Ilocos Sur balikbayan.

Jose Singson Jr., the regional partner and franchisee of Asian Spirits here, said the flight will be considered once they can establish that there are as many balikbayan coming from Ilocos Sur as there are in Ilocos Norte.

Asian Spirits on Feb. 21 revived the Manila-Laoag-Manila route after Philippine Airlines withdrew following a quarrel between an airline official and a local politician.

Asian Spirits flies to Laoag and back to Manila every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Asian Spirits Executive Vice President Joaquin Po said they decided to keep the original schedule of PAL so that the passengers, who are making the connecting flight from Hawaii and the US West Coast, where most of the Ilocano balikbayan come from, will not be confused.

Asian Spirits is flying a newly-acquired 100-seat BAe, replacing PAL's 150-seat Airbus A320.

Singson said that based on their analysis, PAL had been filling up 120 of 150 seats for the past three years. "The business was actually peaking months before the airline pulled out," he said.

He also said their report showed half of the PAL passengers were balikbayan, mostly from United States, while half were local tourists.

"If we can establish that there will be an equal number of the Ilocano balikbayan coming from Ilocos Sur compared to those in Ilocos Norte, then establishing the Manila-Vigan flight will be feasible," he said.

He said they would use smaller planes for Vigan and rehabilitate the Mindoro airstrip. Travelling from Laoag International Airport by car to this city takes more than an hour, and from Vigan City to Candon City, the other city in the province, by another hour. But travelling by car from Manila to Laoag takes eight to 10 hours.

Singson said they are going to Taiwan and China this month to forge deals for possible Asian Spirits flights to the two areas. Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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P139

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P99

kg



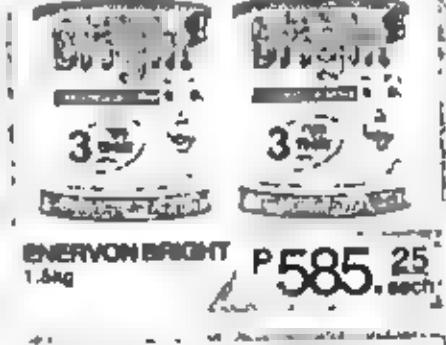
CLARA OLÉ

Tomato Sauce

110g

P45

each



ENEVON BRIGHT

1.5kg

P585.25

each



ZEST-O

Orange

200ml

P4.20

each



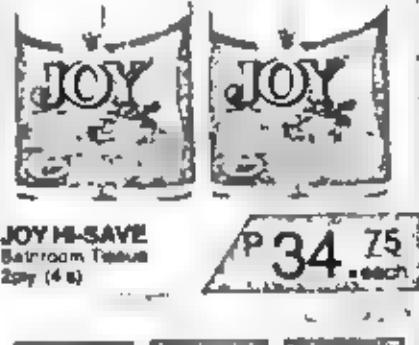
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200ml

P53

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ZEST-O

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200ml

P4.20

each



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Spaghetti

3 Chesse

P51

each



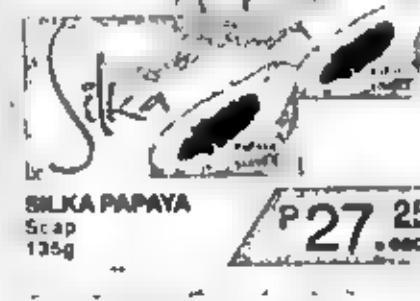
ENEVON PRIME

Choco

1kg

P490

each



SILKA PAPAYA

Soap

135g

P27.25

each



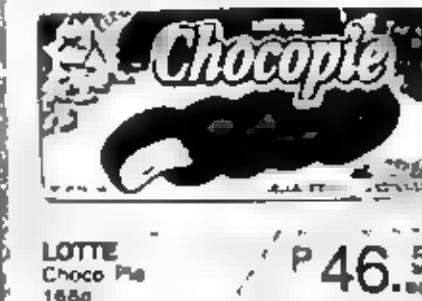
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Downy Scent

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P64.50

each



LOTTE

Choco Pie

165g

P46.50

each



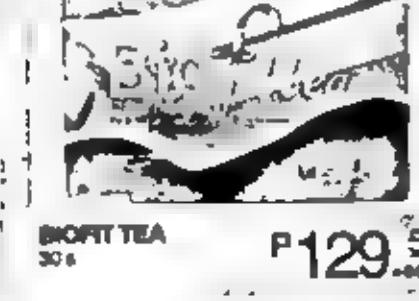
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Downy Scent

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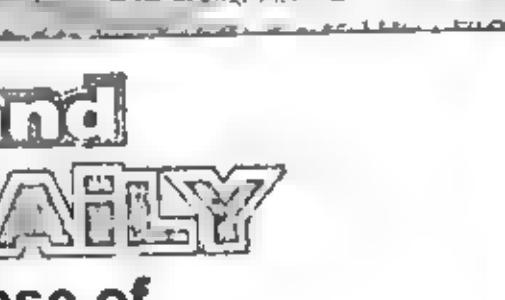
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kg

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kg



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Bacon

kg

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kg



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Reyes accused of 'double talk' on Bulacan mining

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—BULACAN Gov. Josefina de la Cruz on Wednesday accused Environment Secretary Angelo of "double talking" as a new ore transport permit (OTP) was issued to a company that is mining marble at the Biakan-Bato National Park in Doña Remedios Trinidad and San Miguel towns.

"It's a case of saying something and doing another thing. Who else can we believe in this government?" De la Cruz, said, referring to the recent published statements of Reyes about protecting the environment and responsible mining, and, on the other hand, the issuance of an OTP to the Rosemoor Mining and Development Corp. (RMDC).

Angelo Bravo, Mines and Geosciences Bureau director in Central Luzon, has allowed the RMDC to haul 793 cubic meters of marble from its 330-hectare site, a copy of his order showed.

Bravo gave the permit on March 14 even as the Bulacan provincial government in August last year urged the

Department of Environment and Natural Resources to stop the operations of RMDC.

In February this year, the Bulacan government asked the court to issue it a temporary restraining order.

Non-government groups such as the Dangal ng Bulacan Foundation Inc., Bundok and Bangon Kahkasan have campaigned against RMDC's activities at the park, describing them as illegal and destructive to the environment.

The March 14 OTP was the fourth that Bravo has issued. The previous ones were dated Nov. 17, and Dec. 23, 2005 and Jan. 25, 2006.

De la Cruz said Bravo broke his "verbal commitment" to the court that he would not issue any OTP as litigation was ongoing.

The MGB official did not take the calls by the INQUIRER to his mobile phone. He did not answer text messages.

In an earlier interview, Bravo said

RMDC's mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) No. 188 was "legal." It was granted by former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez in 2002.

Personnel of the provincial government monitoring the RMDC reported that the company resumed the hauling of marble blocks on Tuesday night.

Nora Tan, with whom RMDC president Constantine Pascual has a five-year operating and supply agreement until 2008, said the matter was Pascual's problem.

Pascual, who has been locked in an intra-corporate dispute with his relatives, said his operations were legal.

The Arroyo administration defended Reyes' appointment as environment secretary, saying Reyes' background in law enforcement was needed in protecting the environment.

Reyes took over the post vacated by Michael Defensor, who was appointed Ms Arroyo's chief of staff. Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Sariaya port cleared after customs check

A GRAINS TERMINAL IN SARIAYA, Quezon has been cleared of allegations it was being used for smuggling after an inspection by finance and customs officials in its facilities.

In a statement, the Nation Granary Inc. (NGI) said a certificate clearing its shipment of corn had been issued on March 15.

Alison Sy, NGI chief executive officer, said the allegations were false.

She said the 33,000 metric tons of corn that are in a ship docked in the NGI port currently were brought in complete with permits and other documents for importation.

"They (the customs agents) went inside the ships and found nothing irregular," she said in the statement.

She said a group of businessmen could be behind a smear campaign

against NGI because its facilities are world class and are capable of bringing down the cost of feeds in the country.

She refused to identify whom she suspects of being behind what she said was the smear campaign.

But she complained that talk of the port and the grains terminal being used for smuggling was hurting the project.

"Why are they destroying this project?" she asked.

"It's the country that would benefit from it."

She said the projected income from docking fees of ships that arrive at the port could reach at least P50 million a month.

The grains terminal was described as the biggest in Southeast Asia by the United Coconut Planters Bank which provided a P1.5 billion for its construction.

She said the 33,000 metric tons of

corn were brought in to test two ship unloaders that are considered "the Mercedes Benz" of ship unloaders because they are top of the line.

She said officials of the US Department of Agriculture had visited the facilities and saw the equipment there and were impressed.

"Your port is the best," Sy quoted one director of the Asian Development Bank as saying after visiting the port.

"Rumors of smuggling and tax evasion are being used by people who don't want the project to succeed," she said in the statement.

The port was designed to have an 18-meter drop, which the NGI statement said would allow it to accommodate cape-size ships, or vessels that can carry cargo of up to 200,000 metric tons per trip.

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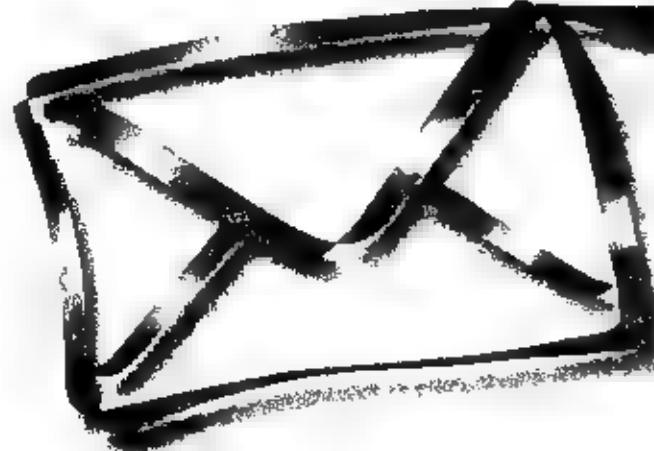
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No live TV for Erap testimony—Sandigan

By Armand N. Nocum

THROWING HIS OWN ARGUMENTS BACK at him, the Supreme Court yesterday rejected deposed President Estrada's petition for his March 22 testimony at his plunder trial to be carried live on television and radio.

In an en banc resolution yesterday, the high court said it found "no compelling reason" to reverse its June 29, 2001 ruling junking a petition from the Kapisanan ng mga Brodaster ng Pilipinas to be allowed to cover live Estrada's plunder trial at the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court.

The high court said its decision "has long become final and executory, and therefore can no longer be reversed or modified. It has become the law of the case."

"The petition is hereby denied for lack of merit," the high court said.

The SC recalled that Estrada had vehemently opposed the KBP request for live coverage of his trial, fearing it would trigger street demonstrations aimed at influencing the Sandiganbayan proceedings, and the Supreme Court agreed with him in two previous rulings.

"Mr. Estrada contends that the right of the people to information may be served through other means less distracting, degrading and

prejudicial than a live television and radio coverage," the SC said in its decision.

But Estrada reversed himself and recently asked the high court to allow his testimony to be televised.

He explained that his initial opposition to live television and radio coverage was "predicated on the fact that public prejudice against him was then running high, inflamed as it were by a biased media and partisan crowds."

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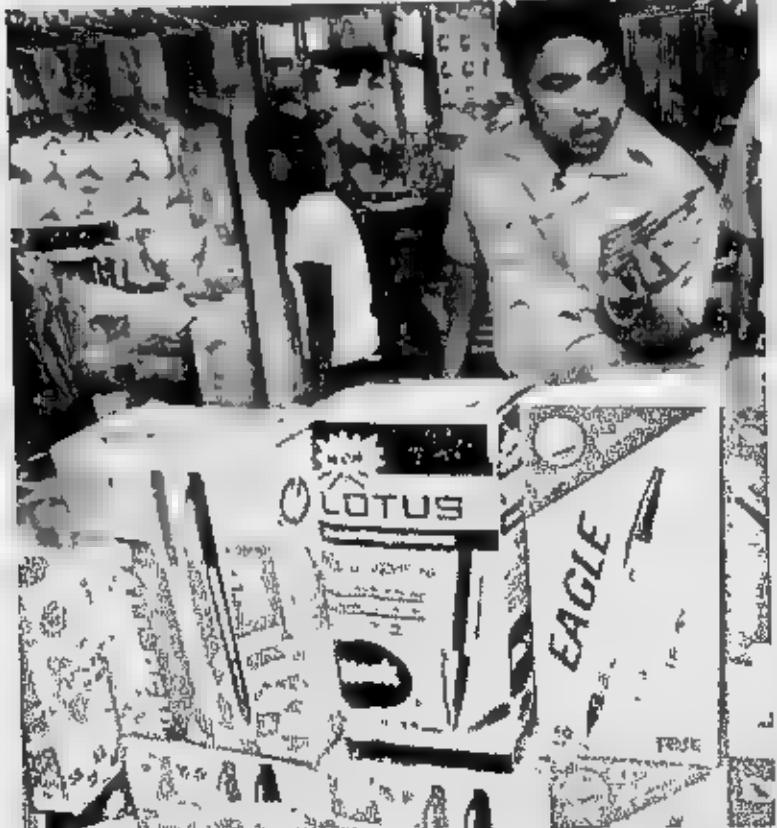
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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GRIEVING
father Darius
Razon with
victim's
children.
RAFFY LERMA

**WHAT'S INSIDE /A24**

Truck driver in Denver Razon car accident says he's not guilty



BUREAU of Customs policeman inspects goods sold inside the mall before inventory.

REN ZAHORA

168 Mall in Binondo raided

By Leila B. Salaverria

A TEAM OF BUREAU of Customs personnel raided the 168 Shopping Mall in Binondo, Manila, yesterday and asked tenants to show proof taxes and duties had been paid on their imported merchandise.

The raiding team seized at least 20,000 sacks of suspected smuggled goods by late afternoon after most stall owners or their helpers failed to produce the necessary receipts. The inspection and inventory of goods were expected to continue until today, but it would be business as usual for other tenants of the mall, according to Ronald Ragudo, president of Yeloofa Development Corporation which runs the mall.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said President Macapagal-Arroyo herself ordered the raid, which was prompted by complaints from the Philippine Retailers Association about unfair trade practices.

He said the operation, involving more than 500 customs personnel, was meant to send a signal to "economic saboteurs."

The 168 Shopping Mall, popular because of its low prices, has about 800 retailers of clothes, shoes, bags, makeup, toys, accessories, household items, and school and

office supplies, among others. It is air-conditioned and has a food court on the third floor. Customs Deputy Commissioner Gallant Soriano said goods not levied duties and taxes were sold at much lower prices, unfairly competing with taxed merchandise. He said the bureau was trying to determine the port of entry of the merchandise. As most stall operators were Chinese nationals, the bureau informed the Chinese Embassy of the operation, said Morales.

Waldo Villamayor, external affairs officer of the 168 Shopping Mall, said the mall was not aware of the status of goods sold in the shopping center. "We're not involved in selling, we're just leasing the space," Villamayor told reporters. "We don't know about the transactions."

Morales said the BOC would not be going after mall officials as the bureau knew it merely rented out space to tenants. He said the mall was not obliged to check the status of the items sold by tenants. But the BOC had the authority to check if establishments selling imported goods paid taxes, Morales added.

After the inventory, seized goods would be stored at the BOC. Tenants could show proof of tax payments in a hearing later. Otherwise, the items would be forfeited in favor of the government. "We will follow due process. But if the owners fail to prove they paid taxes, they could also be held liable for smuggling," Morales said.

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WHAT'S INSIDE /A24

Truck driver in Denver Razon car accident says he's not guilty

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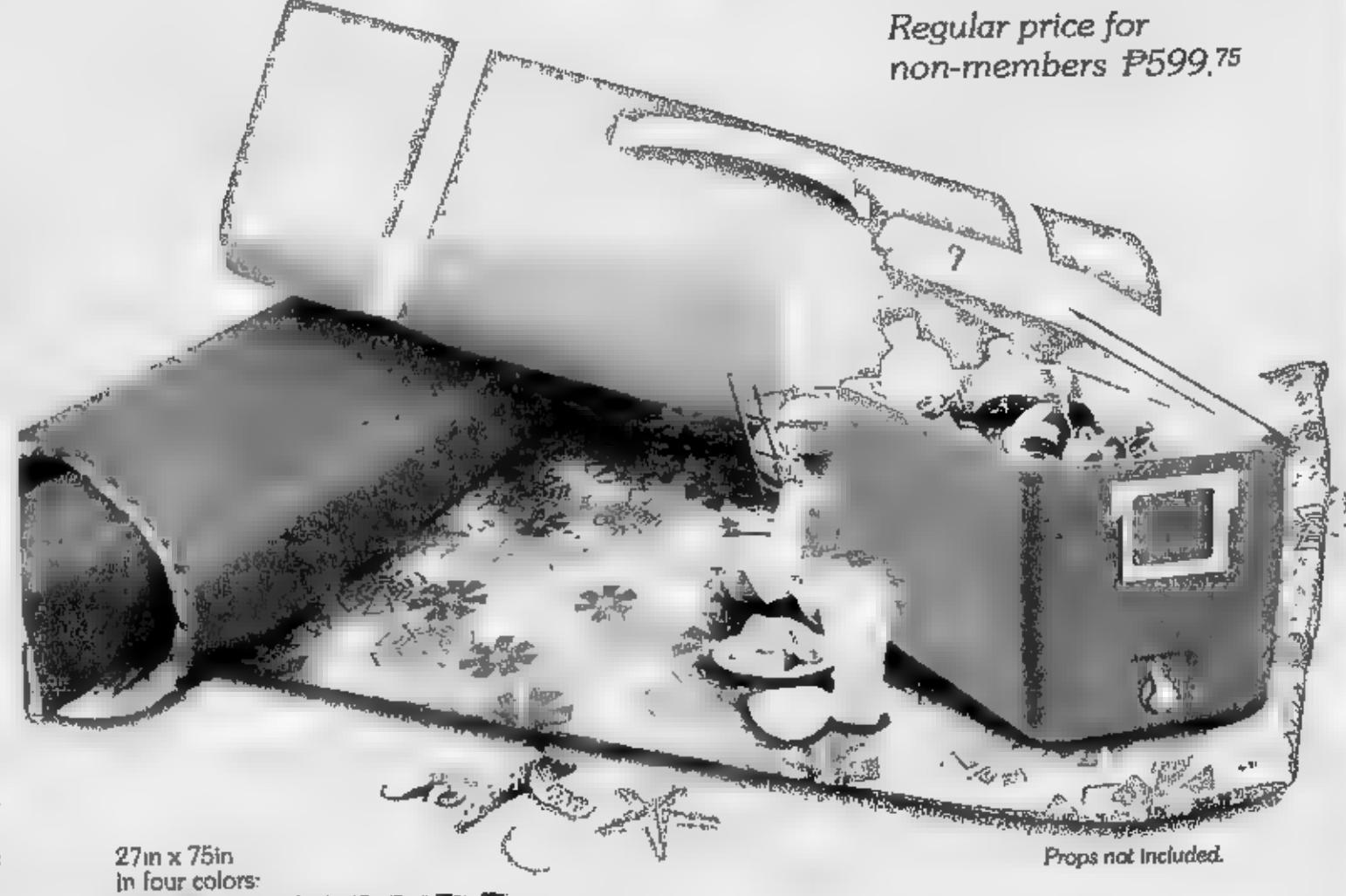
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By DJ Yap

A PAWNSHOP IN QUEZON CITY lost some P6.1 million in cash and jewelry to burglars who entered the establishment through an adjoining rented house.

Four suspected members of the "Acetylene Gang" entered Tam-bunting Pawnshop on Commonwealth Avenue corner Litex Road, Barangay Commonwealth, between Tuesday and Wednesday, according to police.

Torch gang

The suspects bore a hole on the ceiling wall of the house at 182 Commonwealth Avenue, apparently using an acetylene torch, to break into the

pawnshop next door, police said

Loot

The burglars also used an acetylene torch to open the pawnshop vault, according to PO2 Jun Fabre of the criminal investigation division (CID) of the Quezon City Police District.

Melody Sayon, branch personnel manager, told police the burglars carted away P110,000 in cash and P6 million worth of jewelry.

Discovery

The burglary was committed between 10 p.m. of March 14 and 4 a.m. of March 15, police said.

Cherry Dale de los Reyes, branch cashier, discovered the theft when she reported for work the morning of

March 15, police said.

Tenants

Three men and a woman rented on March 13 the house beside the pawnshop from one Teresita Castomico, investigators said.

The house used to be a videoke bar.

One of the men identified himself to the landlady as Nestor, adding that the four of them were from the Cordillera region, police said.

Suspects

PO2 Joseph Madrid, a desk officer at the CID, said the suspects could be members of the Acetylene Gang, a notorious band of thieves victimizing banks and pawnshops.

Gang members often rented space

beside a targeted business establishment that they entered by boring a hole on the wall using an acetylene torch, he said.

Favorite tool

An acetylene torch could dissolve tough materials, including concrete, he explained, and was a favorite tool of burglars.

The police had arrested many Acetylene Gang members in Metro Manila, but some remained active, he said.

Copycats?

"It's also possible that the suspects only imitated the modus operandi of the Acetylene Gang," he added.

Investigators are now trying to get descriptions of the suspects.

Truck driver says accident not his fault

By DJ Yap and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE TRUCK DRIVER INVOLVED IN THE ROAD incident that killed the son of singer and former Mandaluyong City councilor Darius Razon surfaced yesterday to deny any wrongdoing.

"I was not at fault. I didn't hit the car," said Eunice Siazon, 29, driver of the 10-wheeler truck that allegedly sideswiped a Honda City and sent it slamming into an electric post on G. Araneta Avenue early Wednesday morning.

The accident killed Razon's son Denver, 29, a businessman and former show business personality, and hurt his friend Marian Bustillos, 23, who was driving the car.

More than 24 hours after the fatal road accident, Siazon appeared with his lawyer at the Camp Karingal central traffic sector office to submit himself to investigation.

He said it was Bustillos who actually cut him from the right and passed in front of the truck, before slamming into a post and bouncing on the steel gate of Alob-Alob restaurant at the corner of Palanza Street.

"I never hit them. When they passed in front of me, I saw them hit the post. Then I kept going," Siazon said in Filipino.

Bustillos, who was confined at Lourdes Hospital, earlier told police that the truck, with plate number PLY-753, sideswiped them, causing the car to crash into the post.



POLICE investigators inspect truck that allegedly sideswiped Razon's car.

Asked why he did not stop after the accident, Siazon said he was in a hurry to deliver the truck to its depot in Sta Mesa.

Quezon City traffic district director Supt Norberto Babagay said charges of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide, serious physical injuries and damage to property were being readied against Siazon.

Denver's death came 14 years after Razon, who only had two children, lost his teenage daughter in a fire that razed his house in 1992.

Razon said he not only lost a son but a friend. He described his son as "generous, friendly and always willing to help."

He said he was surprised by the outpouring of love for his son and by stories of how Denver helped others.

Denver, who had a degree in Business Administration, owned Bike Spa, a cleaning shop for motorcycles, and Bikers' Grill.

Denver's body lies at the San Roque Parish. He would be buried Tuesday afternoon at the Aglipayan Cemetery in a tomb beside that of his sister.

Lawyers, urban groups seek NorthRail halt

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A LAWYERS' GROUP AND MEMBERS of urban poor organizations yesterday asked a Makati court to stop the implementation of the controversial NorthRail Project, a multi-million dollar infrastructure project that recently spurred a Senate investigation.

Five lawyers from the Makati City-based Roque and Butyan law firm, with the Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay), the League of Urban Poor for Action and its Bulacan chapter, Kilusan ng Maralita sa Meycauayan, filed an injunction against the government and the China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. (CNMEC) before the Makati Regional Trial Court yesterday.

The complainants are asking the court to declare null and void the contract between the defendants for the construction of a \$503 million railway from Caloocan City to Malolos, Bulacan. A China-based firm, CNMEC entered into a memorandum agreement with the government

in September 2002 to pursue the NorthRail Project. President Macapagal-Arroyo's flagship infrastructure project. The suit also asked that the court declare unconstitutional a \$400-million loan agreement between the Export-Import Bank of China and the government, signed two months later for the project's funding.

Respondents

Named as respondents were the CNMEC, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr., National Economic and Development Authority Secretary Augusto Santos, and the North Luzon Railways Corporation, an agency organized under the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) to "develop, construct, operate and manage a railway system from Metro Manila to Central and Northern Luzon."

Filing their complaint in the lower court was a recourse for the group as a case they had filed before the Supreme Court, which

was in essence the same as the civil case filed yesterday, was dismissed with finality in January.

"Clear is the violation of the plaintiffs' rights as taxpayers, who suffer and will continue to suffer severe injury and damage from the expenditure of public funds to enforce or implement void and illegal contracts," reads the complaint, signed by lawyers Herminia Harry Roque, Jr., Joel Butyan, Roger Rayel, Romel Bagares, and Christopher Francisco Bolastig. Roque, a professor at the UP Law Center, was part of the legal team that studied the contract which, it said, contained flaws.

For one, the complaint cited, the contract was not put through "competitive public bidding." It added that the contract "was unfunded at the time it was signed," as the loan agreement between government and Export-Import Bank of China belatedly came into the picture.

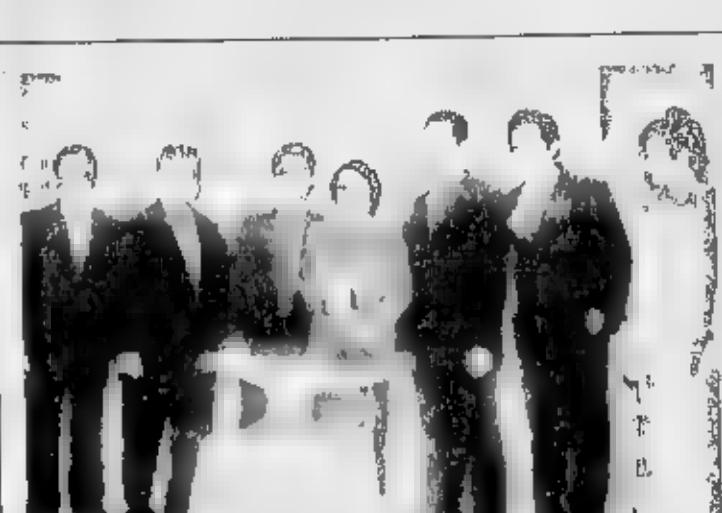
The loan agreement was doubly anomalous, said the complaint, as it was signed "without prior concurrence" of the Mone-

tary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, as required under the law.

No license

"Moreover, prior to the execution of the NorthRail contract and the loan agreement, the CNMEC did not have a special license issued by the government, which is a license required of every foreign contractor who participates in a foreign-funded project," the complaint added. The plaintiffs further said that the implementation of the NorthRail contracts would "cause grave and irreparable injury and damage to the Government and taxpayers."

"It will surely entail the expenditure of a huge amount of public funds for the execution of illegal and unconstitutional acts. It is unconscionable that the government imposes austerity measures and demands new taxes from the people while public money is spent on contracts that are clearly illegal, unconstitutional and unfavorable to the public treasury," said the complaint.

**PR AWARDS FOR ADB**

The Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) recently bestowed Anvil Awards of Merit to the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Philippine Country Office website and e-newsletter for effectively communicating the ADB-Philippines Development Partnership by using both electronic public relations tools. From left are Joel Lacson, 41st Anvil Awards Chairman; Ed Alcaraz, Awards Committee adviser; ADB national staff Romy Doria, Rita Festin, and Norman Lu; Justice Amado D. Valdez, Chair of the Awards' Board of Jurors; and Milen de Quiros, PRSP President.

Ultra stampede victims' kin want 'Wowowee' off the air

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FAMILIES OF VICTIMS IN THE Philsports Arena (formerly Ultra) stampede on Feb. 4 want to stop the game show "Wowowee" from being shown on television so

soon after the tragedy.

They sent a letter on Wednesday to the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) asking it to stop ABS-CBN from airing the show as they were still grieving the loss of loved ones

and surviving victims were still recovering from injuries.

The re-airing of "Wowowee" (at this time) is the height of callousness and insensitivity," they said in their letter to Ronald Oliver Solis, NTC commissioner.

The survivors also asked the NTC to prevent Willie Revillame from hosting the show. Revillame was among those found liable by the National Bureau of Investigation for the stampede that killed 71 people and injured hundreds.

The return of the game show on Saturday reportedly came as a shock to the victims.

Watching it again, they said, reminded them of the horrors of being trampled underfoot during the stampede. The victims want-

ed to join the show's first anniversary celebration. "We, the relatives of those who died and were injured in the stampede, were deeply hurt and insulted by the move of ABS-CBN Management," they said in the letter.

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

US to China: Explain buildup

Huge Sino defense spending worries America

SYDNEY—THE UNITED STATES IS CONCERNED about China's military buildup and Beijing should make its intentions clear, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Thursday.

Rice was speaking at a news conference here after meeting Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and ahead of a new trilateral security dialogue with Japan on Saturday, at which China's growing power is top of the agenda.

"We've said we have concerns about the Chinese military

buildup. We've told the Chinese that they need to be transparent," she said.

"I heard there's going to be a 14 percent increase in the Chinese defense budget—that's a lot—and China should undertake to be transparent about what that means."

Rice's remarks come amid a re-

newed rise in tensions between China and Taiwan after Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian moved to suspend an advisory council set up to look at eventual reunification with the mainland.

China, which regards Taiwan as a renegade province, was infuriated by the decision, calling it a dangerous move toward Taiwan's "independence" and a threat to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific.

Beijing urged the United States, which is Taiwan's biggest military supplier, to take a harder line against Chen ahead of Chinese

President Hu Jintao's visit to Washington next month.

Rice, in an apparent effort to counter suggestions that US President George W. Bush has instead begun taking a more hawkish line on China, said his policy had not changed.

"To the degree we have concerns, we are going to raise them. We're going to raise them about human rights and religious freedoms, but I think this policy has been consistent from the day the president came to Washington," she said. *AFP*



RICE making her point aboard USS Port Royal in Sydney on March 16.

Unforgivable crime, Abbas brands raid

JERICHO, WEST BANK—PALESTINIAN President Mahmoud Abbas on Wednesday condemned Israel's raid on a West Bank prison and seizure of a militant leader as a crime that would not be forgiven.

Across the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, Palestinians went on strike over an Israeli operation that has boosted interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert ahead of March 28 general elections.

Israeli security forces were on high alert after Ahmed Saadat's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Islamist militant group Hamas promised retaliation.

However, militants released the four remaining foreign hostages seized in response to the Israeli raid.

Israeli forces used tanks and bulldozers to tear apart the Jencho jail on Tuesday to grab Saadat, accused by Israel of overseeing the 2001 assassination of Israeli Cabinet Minister Rehavam Zeev, for which responsibility was claimed by the PFLP.

Speaking at the destroyed jail, Abbas accused British and US monitors supervising the incarceration of Saadat and five other detained militants of complicity with Israel.

"What happened is an ugly crime which cannot be forgiven and a humiliation for the Palestinian people and a violation of all the agreements. Their arrest by Israel is illegal," Abbas said.

The United States and Britain, citing security concerns, withdrew the monitors on Tuesday and Israeli forces moved in minutes later. Both denied cooperating with Israel.

Israel said it had to act once the monitors withdrew and it described the raid as a powerful message to Hamas, which is forming a government after winning a January election.

"We are not going to compromise with terror. We are proud that we have imposed justice on these killers without hurting unfairly any other person who was not involved," Olmert told reporters during a meeting with police chiefs in Jerusalem.



PALESTINIAN Authority President Mahmoud Abbas surrounded by guards and media during a visit to the rubble of the prison damaged in an Israeli Army raid in the West Bank town of Jericho March 15.

As protests grow, Thaksin ponders retirement

BANGKOK, THAILAND—PRIME Minister Thaksin Shinawatra of Thailand said Wednesday that he might step aside temporarily in the face of huge continuing protests, but he kept open the option of getting tough instead by declaring a state of emergency.

A sense of crisis intensified in Thailand as thousands of people conducted a round-the-clock demonstration and demands multiplied for the prime minister to resign.

The confrontation echoed popular uprisings in the Philippines, Ukraine, Georgia and other nations where elected leaders have been driven from office by what Thaksin, like other besieged officials, called "mob rule."

As was the case in some of those uprisings, the Thai demonstration, which at its peak attracted a crowd estimated at 100,000, was festive, with pop music, skits, speeches, ice cream, roasted peanuts and per-

odic chants of "Get out!" "It's a good proposal," Thaksin said when a reporter asked about suggestions by business leaders and academics that he take a break from his position as prime minister.

But he added: "This does not mean that I would bow to mob rule. I have to take some time to consider and decide what to do, because I have a duty to complete my mission."

Adding to the mixed signals,

Thaksin on Tuesday promoted to first deputy prime minister Gen. Chudchai Wannasathit, a former classmate who is in charge of security affairs in the Cabinet and is justice minister.

Analysts said this could be read either as preparation for Thaksin to step aside and leave the government in the hands of a trusted subordinate, or as preparation for a crackdown on demonstrators. *New York Times News Service*

Milosevic medical mystery deepens

ROME—FRUSTRATED AND filled with skepticism about Slobodan Milosevic's litany of medical complaints, the tribunal at The Hague at times failed to investigate them adequately, several doctors who had recently examined Milosevic, the former Serbian leader, said this week.

"His medical condition was not good, so we asked for additional tests to evaluate his cardiac situation," said Dr. Florence Leclercq, a French cardiologist. "But these investigations were never performed, and now that's a problem." A tribunal official said it was not possible to comment while an inquiry was under way.

For months before his death last weekend, Milosevic and the UN war crimes tribunal at The Hague had been sparring over

his health: Was he so perilously ill that he needed medical evacuation or was he exaggerating the usual maladies of a 64-year-old man to evade justice? His death ended prematurely a four-year-long war crimes trial, suspended more than 20 times because of his illness, but only deepened the medical mystery.

Preliminary autopsy results said he had died of a heart attack, although doctors who examined him just months ago said they did not believe he had significant heart disease. Likewise, tests done before he died detected the presence of a medicine he had not been prescribed, one that would have put him at risk by reducing the effectiveness of his blood pressure pills.

New York Times News Service



SOCIALIST party officials kiss and touch the coffin of the late Milosevic, draped with a Serbian flag, upon its arrival at Belgrade airport March 15.

But US strategy tags Iran as biggest threat

WASHINGTON—MAKING NO apologies for the war in Iraq, the United States warned states like North Korea and especially Iran Thursday that it will take preemptive military action if necessary to protect itself.

"We may face no greater challenge from a single country than from Iran," the White House said in a blueprint called the "National Security Strategy" of the United States, a copy of which was obtained by AFP.

North Korea "presents a long and bleak record of duplicity and bad-faith negotiations," the document said, warning: "We will continue to take all necessary mea-

sures to protect our national and economic security against the adverse effects of their bad conduct."

In other areas, the United States warned Russia that its relations with the West depend on pursuing democratic reforms and urged China to follow economic opening with political freedom—while saying that Washington would "hedge" for the possibility that Beijing does not do so.

The document made clear that Washington does not view the failure to find the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) at the core of the public case for the 2003 invasion of Iraq as a blow against its strategy of preventive war. *AFP*

WORLD BRIEFS

Despite US, new UN rights council

UNITED NATIONS—Brushing aside objections from the United States, the UN General Assembly on Wednesday overwhelmingly endorsed creation of a revamped body to replace the current, discredited Human Rights Commission. By a vote of 170 in favor, four against—the United States, Israel, Palau and Marshall Islands—and three abstentions—Iran, Venezuela and Belarus—the assembly passed a resolution setting up a 47-member Human Rights Council. The new body is designed to be more effective and will replace the current, Geneva-based Commission, which has seen its credibility tarnished by the presence among its 53 members of notorious human rights abusers such as China, Cuba, Sudan and Zimbabwe. *AFP*

Widows not as grief-stricken as believed

WASHINGTON—The sad image of a grieving widow may not be entirely accurate, according to a study published on Tuesday showing that six months after the death of their partner, nearly half of older people had few symptoms of grief. And 10 percent cheered up, according to the survey conducted by the University of Michigan and paid for by the National Institute on Aging. The study, which followed 1,500 couples over the age of 65 for years, looked at the quality of their marriages, their attitudes toward one another, and the effects on one spouse after the other died. Close to half—46 percent—said they had enjoyed their marriages but were able to cope with the loss of a spouse without much grieving.

"Until recently, mental health experts assumed that persons with minimal symptoms of grief were either in denial, emotionally distant or lacked a close attachment to their spouse," Rutgers University sociologist Deborah Carr, who began analyzing the data while she was at the University of Michigan, said. *Reuters*



Saddam urges war on US in trial

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Saddam Hussein took the witness stand on Wednesday for his first formal testimony in his trial and delivered an invective political diatribe that urged Iraqis to stop sectarian bloodshed and to carry on the war against the Americans. The presiding judge halted the session after Saddam repeatedly lambasted the court. Saddam's nearly 40-minute speech was the most explosive element so far in a trial that has already been punctuated by tirades from the defendants and searing testimony from victims. Saddam had delivered outbursts before, but his sense of decorum and calm manner on Wednesday showed he was keenly aware that the spotlight was reserved for him. He went on to do exactly what Iraqi and US officials had long feared he might—use the session, televised across the Middle East, to try to incite the Sunni-led insurgency to further violence. *NYT*

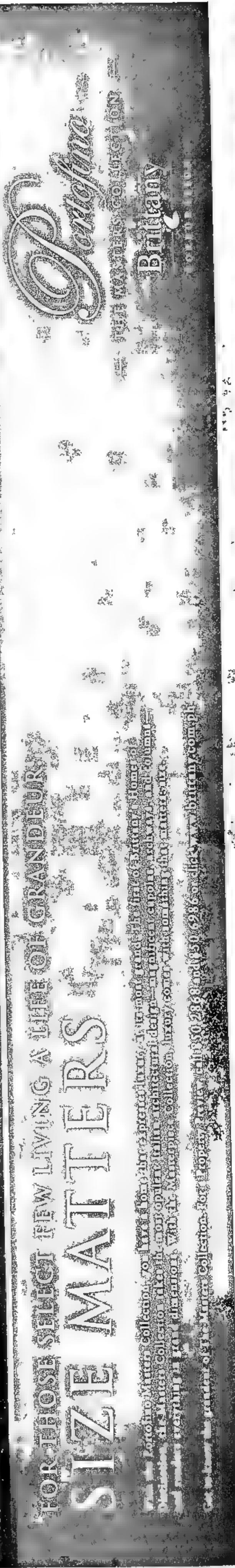
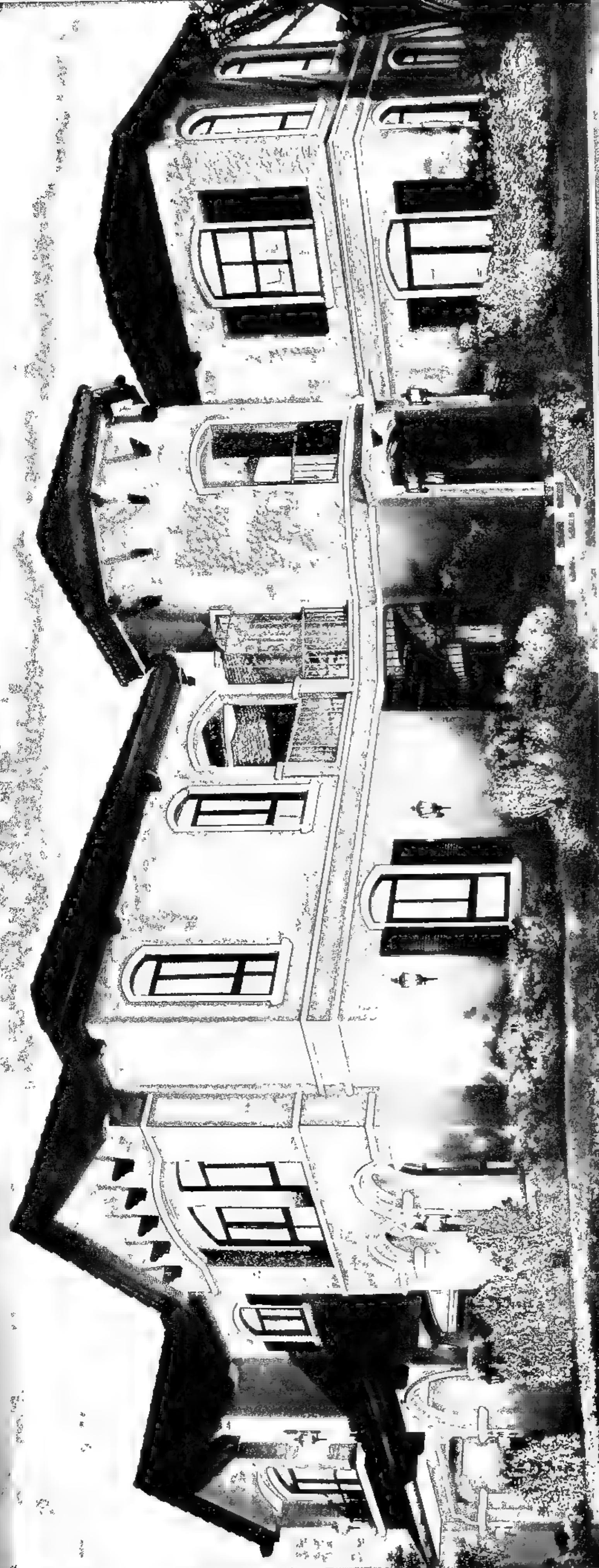
Clooney gives Oscar swag to charity

LOS ANGELES—The Oscar was gift enough for George Clooney. The winner of the Academy Award for best supporting actor for his role in "Syriana" has donated his overflowing Oscar gift bag to the United Way, a spokesperson for the organization said Wednesday. The swag will be sold in an online auction to benefit the United Way Hurricane Response and Relief Recovery Fund, said spokesperson Sheila Consaul. Clooney is a member of the charity's board of trustees, she said. The pricey gift bag given to presenters at the 78th Annual Academy Awards included a BlackBerry 8700c, a Kay Unger kimono and a cultured Tahitian-pearl necklace. The entire collection will be sold to "one very, very lucky bidder," Consaul said. *AP*



PlayStation 3 release now in November

TOKYO—After postponing the release of its next-generation PlayStation video game console until November, Sony tried to put a good face on the move on Wednesday by portraying it as a marketing decision. But analysts called it a potentially costly step that reflected delays in critical components and difficulties in containing prices. The delay of the new console, PlayStation 3, analysts said, was a setback for the turnaround efforts of Sony's chief executive, Howard Stringer, at a time when the company badly needs a new hit product. Sony, once a high-flying electronics maker and still perhaps the biggest name in the industry, has fallen on hard times as cheap competition from China has eroded earnings of bread-and-butter consumer electronics products like televisions. Ken Kutaragi, president of Sony's game division, apologized repeatedly during a hastily called meeting of game software developers, analysts and reporters for failing to have the console ready in Japan this spring, as originally promised. *NYT*



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RP Open golf gets big lift

By Jong Arcano

A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE PHILIPPINE OPEN GOLF Championship is looming on the horizon.

A partnership forged between the Asian Tour and the National Golf Association of the Philippines makes the 90th edition of the Philippine Open on May 25 to 28 a certainty, with a prize fund of at least \$200,000 (about P10.2 million).

Although the venue was not announced, there are indications that the Open is head-

ing back to the fabled east course of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

But before that happens, Wack Wack needs to return to the NGAP fold as a member after resigning several years ago in the aftermath of a disagreement which also had the Open as the main issue.

"We are looking for a venue that is com-

mercially viable," said Patrick Young, director for tour development of the Asian Tour, hinting at Wack Wack as the best choice.

Wack Wack officials pledged to work out a special agreement with the NGAP to pave the way for the Open hosting.

Young said they are bent on bringing back the prestige of the RP Open, the oldest professional tournament in Asia.

Outgoing NGAP president Benny Gopez

signed the agreement with Young for a five-year deal giving commercial and media rights of the Philippine Open to the Asian Tour at Villamor yesterday.

The deal guarantees the NGAP of \$15,000 as rights fees this year, \$20,000 next year and \$30,000 for the third year.

Gopez and secretary-general Luisito Fernandez are not seeking re-election in the NGAP polls on March 24.



BENNY Gopez and Patrick Young sealed the agreement with a handshake. RODERICK TONI

Tierro stuns Korean, meets No. 1 Austrian

PATRICK JOHN TIERRO SHOCKED No. 7 seed Hyun Woo-nam of Korea, 6-4, 6-4, yesterday to earn a quarter finals showdown against top seed Austrian Herbert Wirsching in the \$25,000 New Delhi Masters at the R K Khanna Stadium in New Delhi.

The 6-foot-1 SEA Games gold medalist leaned on his heavy serves and powerful forehands to take the sting out of the 22-year-old Korean in the event which is under the Asso-

ciation of Tennis Professionals/International Tennis Federation circuit.

Supported by Cebuana Lhuillier, Jean Henn Lhuillier and the Philippine Tennis Association, Tierro, whose service game has not been broken since the first round, broke his foe's serve once on each set.

The Korean is ranked No. 813 in the world, while Tierro is the lowest ranked player at 1173. Wirsching reached as high as No. 171 in 2000.

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Escape 3.0L	1,399,000	200,000	104,300	71,600	56,800	40,500	32,500	27,761	699,500	58,293	40,800	32,300	23,000	18,400	15,800
Focus 1.8L	945,000	100,000	74,719	51,438	40,975	29,237	23,594	20,389	472,500	41,071	28,195	22,516	16,066	12,972	10,988
Focus 1.8L with Shift	975,000	100,000	77,429	53,314	42,461	30,298	24,448	21,133	487,500	42,426	29,073	23,250	16,597	13,399	11,354
Everest 4x2 MT	1,065,000	150,000	78,500	-	42,500	31,500	23,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Everest 4x2 AT	1,115,000	150,000	82,500	-	45,500	33,500	24,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Everest 4x2 AT Leather Seats	1,150,000	150,000	86,500	-	48,500	35,500	25,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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ENTERTAINMENT

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Editor Emmie G. Velarde

Blame it on the bossa nova!

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

ON ANY GIVEN DAY, AN FM radio listener in these parts is sure to chance upon a Sergio Mendes recording. That's because radio programmers feel that these tunes—"The Look of Love," "Where is the Love," "Hey Look at the Sun" and "Waters of March," among others—though not Mendes originals, have been delivered in a specific style that makes people feel good.

Mendes first became famous worldwide as band leader of the Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66—named after his country and the year his record label, A&M, released the album that yielded the hit "Mas Que Nada," featuring the distinctive vocals of American Lau Hall.

From then on, Mendes' musical touring act would be regarded as a launching pad of talented vocalists and a great interpreter of songs. He himself has written several originals, notably another Pinoy FM staple, "Waiting for Love."

The cynical might dismiss Mendes as a 65-year-old has-been plucked out of retirement for old fans to reminisce on retro music. That would be terribly wrong. The late 1990s lounge music revival created a resurgence of respect for his extensive body of work, especially his bossa nova period.

In fact, he has a brand-new CD, "Timeless," which highlights collaborations with the likes of Black Eyed Peas' will.i.am.

At the Mandarin Oriental Hotel on Wednesday, the Araneta Group of Companies presented Mendes to promote his one-night concert tomorrow at the Big Dome.

Jet lagged, the man tried hard not to be annoyed by our questions, which forced him to recall moments in a career that began in the clubs of Rio de Janeiro in the late '50s, and being mentored by Antonio Carlos Jobim.

Tell us about the club scene in Rio when you started.

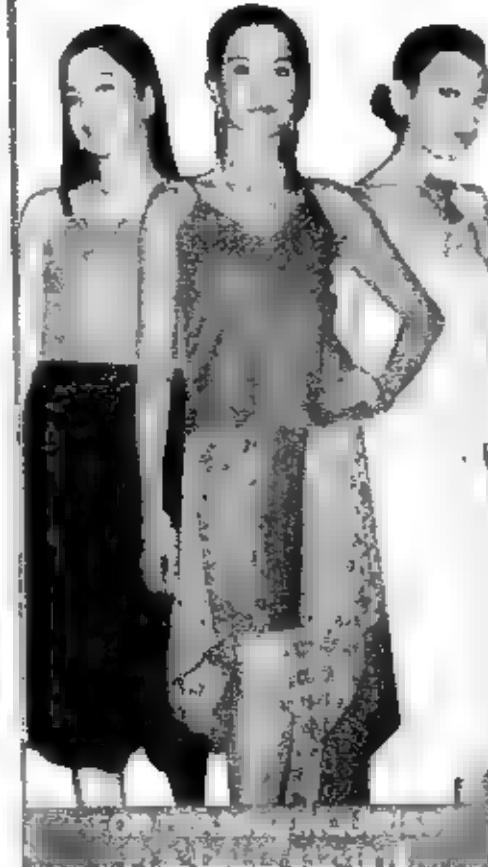
Those were wonderful times! I played at the Copacabana and other clubs.

What's so special about bossa nova that made

Sergio Mendes, in Manila for a one-night gig, answers questions about his stunning five-decade career

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New MMFF rules out

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

NEW RULES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED FOR THE 2006 Metro Manila Film Festival.

INQUIRER Entertainment obtained a "summary of the revisions" made in the MMFF regulations—foremost of which is that all 10 entries will open simultaneously on Dec. 25.

"All at the same time," confirmed Bayan Fernando, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, which runs the annual event.

Deadline for the submission of screenplays was extended to May 15 from April 30, according to Rolly Josef, Fernando's chief of staff and a member of the selection, screening and executive committees.

The deadline extension was affirmed by Manny Nuqui and Ric Camaligan, festival execs.

Another revision is that "applicants should show proof of financial capability to produce the required prints and undertake promotions for the film."

Josef explained that this rule was added because last year, at least two producers failed to submit the minimum number of prints.

(According to Camaligan, each producer needs "50 to 60 prints" so that his movie can be shown nationwide.)

Festival sufferers

The same producers also didn't have sufficient budget to promote their movies, said Josef.

"Two producers had to take out loans," Josef said. "It would be to the detriment of the festival, if an applicant didn't have the capa-

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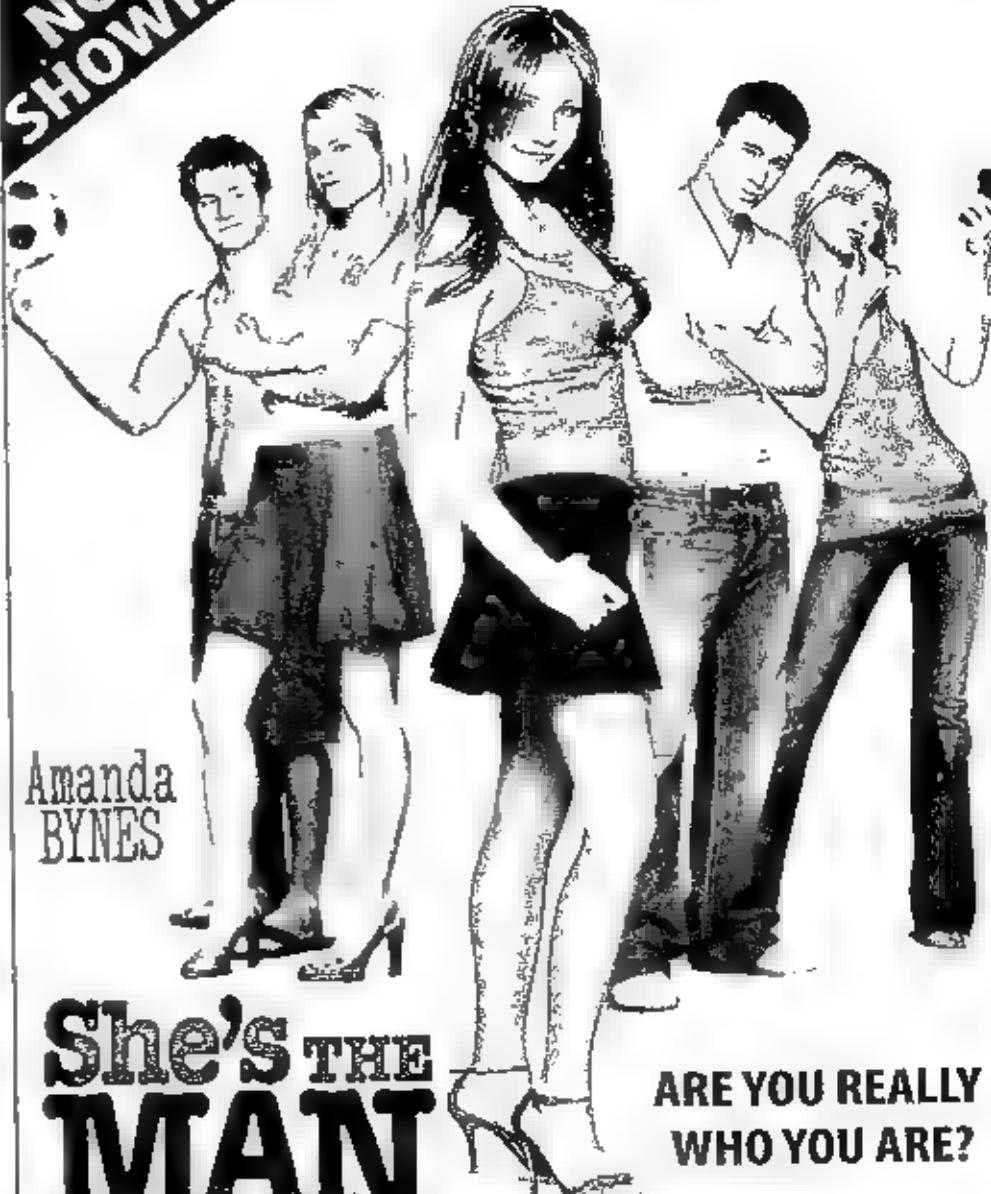
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ENTERTAINMENT

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006

The sparkling Ms Portman

From page A2-5

dressed on the red carpet. Are there no conflicts between these two lifestyles?

When you're lucky in life, I don't think you should feel guilty and not take advantage of it. [I] enjoy the fun and beauty of clothes as art or whatever but don't get wrapped up in it. All my shoes are from Target (laughs). I like Stella McCartney because she does non-leather stuff.

How did you become a vegetarian?

It was a whole series of circumstances—your reasons change over time. I like being a vegetarian.

an. When I was nine, I went to a Jewish school. We weren't kosher at home. My mom used to make chicken salad sandwiches. I would have to lie to everyone that it's tuna. I hated lying so much, that my mom had to make me kosher lunches. Now, it has become a really central thing in my life. Many religions associate food with belief because you eat three times a day. For me, the most important thing is preserving and respecting life in all its forms. So three times a day, I think about that.

You had no less than Luc Besson as director for your first film, "The Professional." You were only in your pre-teens. How do you remember that experience?

It was amazing. Mainly, I remember them keeping it fun and very childlike for me, always making it like a game and treating me like the little princess of the set. It was so nice and to have an experience like that, to have Luc Besson as your first director and Jean Reno and Gary Oldman as your first co-actors. It raises your standards.

What is your next film? And what do you do for fun?

I am starting a children's film in about a month called "Mr. Magellan's Wonder Emporium," with Dustin Hoffman, which I'm very excited about. I like a good laugh more than anything else. I'm figuring out what to do after that. As for my free time, I wish I had a little more (laughs). I love spending time with my friends. When I can't be cause I'm away, I read a lot and watch a lot of movies.

(E-mail the columnist at rvinpales_5585@yahoo.com)

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FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006

ENTERTAINMENT

A2's

cause he tries a hundred different options. Like he'll say let's do it serious ... now, kind of funny ... you can do that only with a new director.

In your discussions with the directors and writers, did you connect the movie to what's going on in the world today?

There are resonances in the world today. This particular piece was written in 1984 about Thatcher's England but the fact that it can apply to so many different times and places shows the cyclical nature of these occurrences in history.

Your family in real life is also politically involved.

My grandfather was a Socialist Zionist, a left wing leader in Poland. So I definitely have this Socialist background, which I appreciate. I was brought up trying to see everyone on equal ground, to be concerned for other people and to desire to make the world a better place.

You recently traveled to Morocco. What inspired that trip?

I have been to Morocco twice now. I went once alone when I was in college. There's this book called "The Future Of Life" that's all about the environment and about how because human beings originated in Africa and Asia, the Middle East is the center of those two continents, that it's the environment that humans are most evolutionarily adapted to and feel most comfortable in. Whenever I'm in the desert atmosphere, I feel like I am in equilibrium with the environment. When I finished "Q" I went for a few days as a birthday present for myself. There was this storm, so unusual in the desert. I ended up in a tent with six strangers, watching this amazing lightning. To actually have this silence in the desert was very helpful to me.

Going to "Goya's Ghost," how was your experience filming in Spain?

I loved the crew and I loved experiencing a different culture. I felt socially adept because ... they were working hard and then partying all night, then going

back to work. Everyone was like, aren't you in your early 20s?

How have you stayed away from the public eye, unlike some of your peers?

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HOUSE OF FURY	YOURS, MINE & OURS	SHAGGY DOG
10/3/15/5:30/7:25/9:30	1:30/3:30/5:30	12/10/2:55/5:10/7:25/9:40

SHE'S THE MAN	CASANOVA	DATE MOVIE
12/10/4:00/6:40/9:20	7:30/9:30	1:00/2:10/5:20/7:30/9:40 16 BLOCKS 1:55/4:30/7:05/9:40

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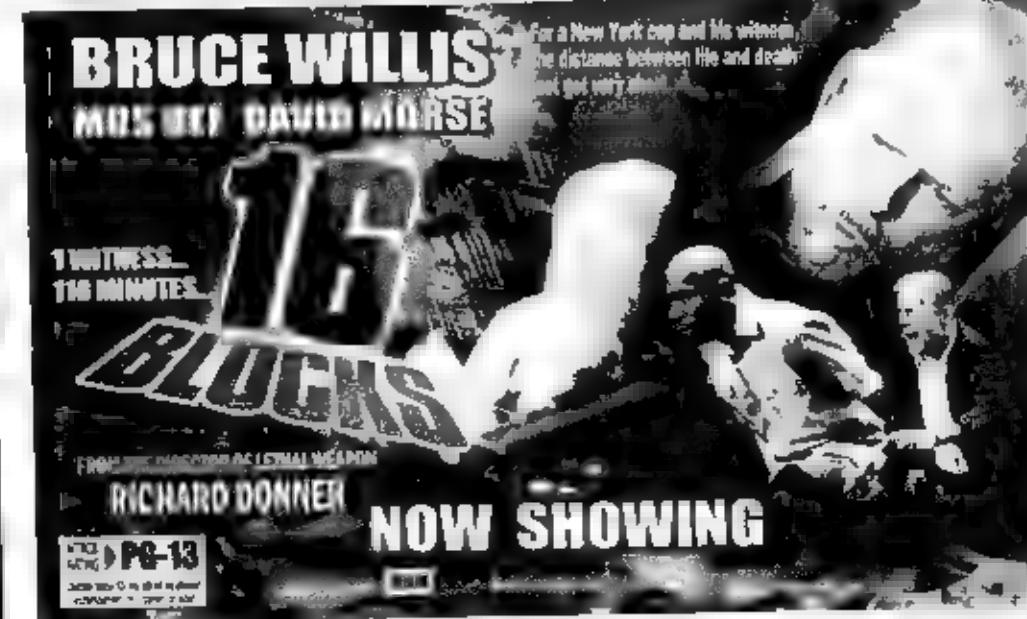
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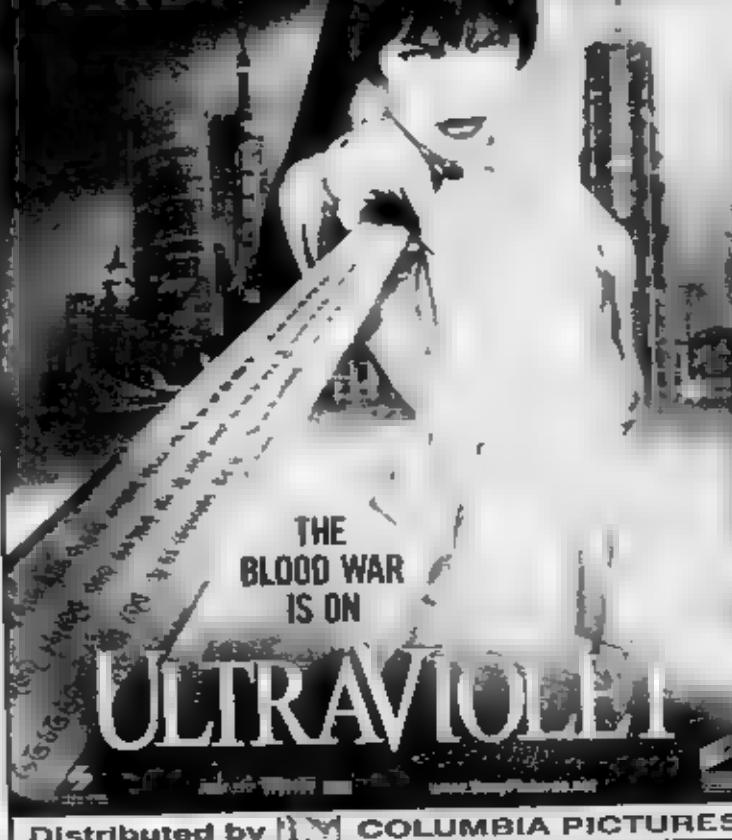
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**The sparkling Ms Portman**

LOS ANGELES—THE MOVIE HAS A masked man in a black cape. Red roses. A beautiful lady held captive.

"Is this 'Phantom of the Opera, Part Two'?" I teased Natalie Portman.

"We were definitely always laughing, with the roses and the masks and all, but it's such a different movie," Natalie replied, laughing. "V for Vendetta" is different. This film adaptation of Alan Moore's graphic novel (illustrated mostly by David Lloyd), which has parallels to headline stories about terrorism and government oppression going on all over the world today, is getting important media coverage, including an advance review and story in Time magazine.

The action-drama is

Natalie's first major solo film. One drab winter afternoon in New York's Mandarin Oriental Hotel, the Jerusalem-born actress was dressed regally for the part. Wearing a striking white dress by Italian designer Giambattista Valli, she cut a striking figure despite her petite size (elfin is a word often used to describe her).

We've seen her on the red carpet but spending an hour with her in a press con, we realized she was even lovelier. The white dress set off her beautiful eyes—clearly her best asset. Her hair is starting to grow back after it was shaved off for a scene in "V for Vendetta."

This Harvard graduate, once voted "sexiest v-gatarian" in an online poll by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), is a delight to talk to. James McTeigue, who was Natalie's assistant director in "Star Wars" prequels, and who now directs her in "V" told me, "You only need to be in the room with Natalie for about 30 seconds before you understand how bright she is."

Hugo Weaving, famous as Agent Smith in the "Matrix" movies, saw Natalie in a different perspective. In "V" he is a terrorist freedom fighter who begins a violent guerrilla campaign to destroy a totalitarian government. Hugo said to me that with the mask, he really couldn't see Natalie's face, but saw something else. "I was often looking at her breasts," Hugo admitted with a smile.

The "Matrix" connection does not stop with Hugo. Read on for Natalie's insight into the media-elusive Wachowski brothers, who wrote and directed the "Matrix" movies, and who are the writers and co-producers of "V."

Didn't you dread the scene where your head was shaved? Would you do it again?

I was actually excited; I thought it would be fun and liberating. I don't know if I'd do it again—but only because it takes a really long time to grow back. The most stressful thing was ... that was a one-shot scene so you want to make sure that the cameras don't mess up, that the razor doesn't mess up, and I don't start laughing."

What was the biggest adjustment you had to make as a woman with a shaved head?

It was probably that I became pretty anonymous, like I could walk down the streets in New York and no one stopped me. But when your head is shaved, you get stared at a lot. I also had a cold issue. I remember being in Berlin in that winter with no hair.

Did you feel an urge to try on Hugo's mask?

No (laughs). Hugo said it was so hot! [But] even for his off-camera lines, he would keep it on, just to help me react.

Do you wear metaphorical masks?

I think I'm a pretty open person. But I have to sort of be careful because you don't want complete strangers knowing intimate details of your life (laughs).

The Wachowski brothers rarely give interviews. You had the rare privilege of knowing them during the filming. What are they like?

They're amazing people, really down to earth. If someone comes up and asks them, no, not if they're the Wachowski Brothers but say, what is this movie about, they'll end up talking to that stranger for half an hour. They're extremely approachable, nice guys who are incredibly smart. They're sort of egoless [but] beyond interesting. They were on the set every day.

What are your thoughts on "V" creator Alan Moore going public, saying that he does not want to be associated with the movie version?

Those who made the movie really respect and admire Alan's work. He's had bad experiences in the past so I think it comes from that.

You just finished making "Goya's Ghost" with director Milos Forman. Can you compare working with an award-winning veteran like Milos and a first-time director like James McTeigue?

The big difference is that Milos knows exactly what he's going to cut. He never shoots more than what's necessary. James wants to try a lot of different things. That's exciting to me as an actor be-

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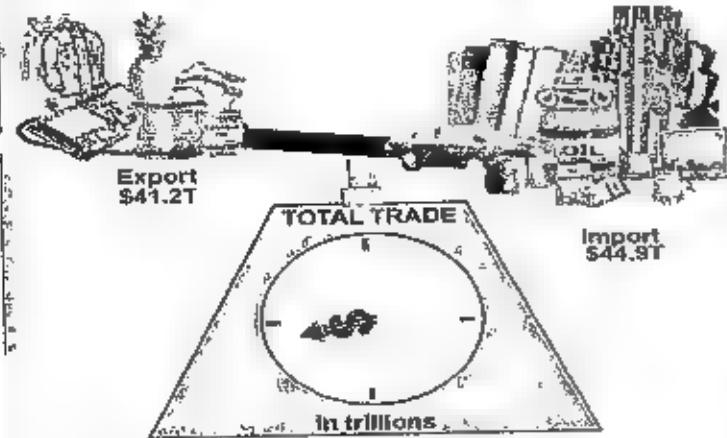
BOP surplus triples to \$2.03B

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Balance of trade

THE COUNTRY'S trade deficit in 2005 stood at \$ 3.67 trillion, a 16 percent decline compared to the previous year's \$4.36 trillion.



Source: National Statistics Office

Chorn B. Galang, PDI Research

Investments, remittances
seen to push up windfall

By Doris C. Dumao

THE PHILIPPINES POSTED A BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SURPLUS OF \$2.03 BILLION FROM JANUARY TO FEBRUARY, ABOUT THREE TIMES GREATER THAN THE \$685 MILLION REGISTERED IN THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas brought on by inflows from foreign borrowings, foreign investments and local bank deposits.

INDICATORS

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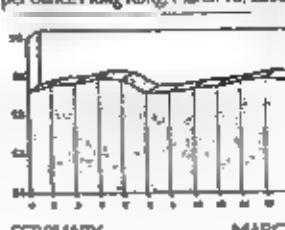
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P 51.14 = \$ 1

As of 5 p.m., March 16, 2006

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CAP clients urge SC to junk RTC order

Motion filed to reverse decision allowing CAP to stop payment of policies

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HUNDREDS OF PRE-NEED PLAN HOLDERS have asked the Supreme Court to junk a Makati court's decision allowing College Assurance Plan Philippines (CAP) to temporarily stop payment of its obligations to clients.

Syquia Pascual-Lopez & Santos, the legal counsel representing 336 CAP plan holders, yesterday filed the petition for certiorari and prohibition against Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Romeo Barza.

In their petition, the plan holders asked the court to annul a stay order issued by Barza, which suspended last Sept. 13 CAP's payment of its obligations.

Also, they asked the high court to cancel an order issued on Dec. 16, 2005, granting CAP's petition to under-

go corporate rehabilitation.

Plan holders said that rehabilitation proceedings should not be used to cover up and perpetuate alleged fraud.

When the Makati court last year granted CAP's petition for rehabilitation, it also directed the pre-need firm's receiver to evaluate the rehabilitation scheme.

CAP's receiver, Marmerto Marcelo Jr., is also included in the plan holders' petition. They asked the high court to nullify Marcelo's appointment as receiver and to declare CAP in contempt for forum shopping.

CAP legal counsel Gilbert Reyes told the INQUIRER that officials of the pre-need firm have not been served a copy of the petition.

The law firm Syquia Pascual-Lopez & Santos argued that Barza's orders

granting CAP's petition for rehabilitation and suspending payments were issued "without, or in excess of, jurisdiction and with grave abuse of discretion."

They said the relationship between a plan holder and a pre-need corporation is one of trust and not a debtor-creditor relationship. Hence, a pre-need firm may not avail of rehabilitation proceedings to stop payments to plan holders.

The lawyers also said that rehabilitation proceedings, as in the case of CAP, may not be utilized to cover up fraud.

But according to Reyes, CAP's counsel, the Makati court judge acted with prudence.

"I do not see where the Barza court went wrong in this," Reyes said. "[The plan holders' decision to file the petition] is a total waste of precious judicial

time and resources, at a time when we should be concentrating on how best to protect the greater interest of all plan holders by devising a realistic ... rehabilitation [plan] for CAP. This is what the Barza court directed the interim receiver to determine, is such a rehab plan possible? That study is still ongoing."

Also, the lawyer said he could not see the legal basis behind the plan holders' petition.

"The court has not even acted on the rehab plan," Reyes said. "Whether CAP goes on rehab or is ordered to be liquidated, the first step is to issue a stay order to put some order into the process, and avoid a mad scramble for assets by claimants."

CAP has about 780,000 plan holders. Its license to sell securities was suspended in 2004.

SyCip: US dev't ideas do not ensure success

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER WESTERN countries should not impose their ideas on less developed economies as there are different paths to industrialization and development for different countries, a gathering of American business groups in the region was told.

Washington SyCip, founder of audit and management consultancy firm SGV Group, said the very success of the US and other Western countries might cause them to believe that their own formulas for success should be blindly followed by all the others.

SyCip was speaking at the annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Council of American Chamber of Commerce that would end today at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

"My suggestion is to let nations at different stages of economic development to decide what to adopt and when to adopt," he said.

"What the (richer nations) should do is to help the poorer ones) on education as this is the best way to reduce poverty," he added. The rest will follow naturally."

SyCip was referring to the insistence of industrialized nations for developing economies to implement Western-style democracy and institutions, including unhampered mass media.

A member of the Harvard University Asia Center's advisory committee, SyCip said that the ideal and proven model for rapid economic development in East Asia was "strong and maybe authoritarian political leadership, hopefully not too corrupt."

However, he said there must be economic freedom so that the citizens would be motivated to create wealth and that opportunities for corruption by politicians would be reduced.

He countered Western experts "who wrongly assume" that economic freedom was not normal under authoritarian governments, saying this was actually the successful models of the widely praised Tigers of Asia—Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Taiwan was under martial law and South Korea was under a military dictatorship when their per capita incomes were at present levels of China, SyCip said. "Democracy came naturally only after income levels rose and their people were educated and well fed."

Also chair of the Asian Institute of Management's board of trustees and of governors, SyCip said data from the United Nations and the World Bank indicated that Western-style democracy was sustainable only if annual per capita income levels were above \$3,000 or even \$4,000.

"(These amounts) are much more than the income levels of South Asia or countries like the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia and Laos," SyCip said.

As for freedom of the mass media, SyCip countered the assumption that this is a must for nations to develop.

Peso closes ...

From page B1

Currency traders said the peso succumbed to profit-taking as the yen fell in Asian trade after the Bank of Japan hinted that short-term interest rates in the country would remain near zero for the time being.

The indication that the interest rates would be kept low dragged down the Japanese yen against the US dollar to 117.89 yen from around 117.50 yen.

At the Philippine Dealing System, dealers said the dollar was oversold against the peso, providing buying opportunity for those who want to beef up their holdings of the greenback.

"There was short covering for dollars," the traders said. "This could continue especially ahead of a weekend."

Another trader said that the low exchange rate also "attracted corporate demand."

The volume of transactions yesterday eased to \$461.5 million from \$663.57 million Wednesday.

Traders expect the peso to trade within a range of 51.05-51.25 against the US dollar today.

At press time, the financial market is also awaiting the release of the Philippine government's February budget deficit data.

Doris C. Dumlaq

BOP surplus ...

From page B1

ments and overseas Filipino workers remittances, was in line with the surge in the country's foreign exchange reserves to a new record high of \$20.58 billion as of end-February.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the significant improvement in the country's external liquidity would allow the prepayment this April of \$500 million in debts ahead of the original maturity in October.

For the month of February, the BOP surplus amounted to \$104 million, smaller than the \$962 million surplus posted in the same month last year.

The BOP figure in February was also smaller than the \$1.92 billion surplus posted in January, when the government raised \$1.5 billion from offshore bond offerings.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. Its major components are the current account and the capital and financial account.

Any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident, like importation, is a deficit item in the BOP. On the other hand, any transaction which gives rise to a receipt, like borrowing, exporting or inward remittance, is a surplus item.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006

BUSINESS**Equitable fever**

SSS CHAIR THELMO CUNANAN yesterday said the P95 per Equitable PCIBank share proposal from GSIS "look(ed) very inviting" but that he and the SSS board were waiting for a formal communication from the Government Service Insurance System.

The P95 figure is being quoted by GSIS president Winston Garcia, saying he has an unnamed buyer who wants to acquire the SSS, Sy and GSIS blocks for undisputed majority control of Equitable PCIBank.

Garcia met Wednesday with Equitable PCIBank vice chair Teresita Sy, promising to submit a formal offer to Sy before the March 29 bank board meeting if she would conditionally agree to accept the P95 offer, along with the Social Security System.

Yesterday, Garcia spent his day convincing key SSS board members on his proposal, preparatory to his submitting a written offer in time for the SSS board meeting on Wednesday.

Nokia moves to win provincial markets

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE LOCAL UNIT OF NOKIA, THE world's largest mobile phone maker, further increased its share of the highly competitive Philippine market last year, its country head said.

In a presentation to the media on Wednesday, Nokia Philippines country general manager Parikshit Bhasin said the company's "penetration rate" here stood at 41 percent as of end 2005.

He said this was an improvement from the previous year's penetration rate. However, he did not reveal exact figures.

Despite Nokia's dominant market share, Bhasin said the company would continue to aggressively market its products in the country, moving its focus now to

Equitable PCIBank chair Corazon de la Paz, who is also SSS vice chair and president, was out of the country again, but has promised to be back in time for the SSS and Equitable PCIBank board meetings.

Market speculation that the family of tycoon Henry Sy Sr. was even willing to consider the Garcia proposal helped boost Equitable PCIBank share prices, which closed yesterday at P73, from only P64.50 last week.

Incidentally, the combined stakes of SSS, GSIS and Sy-Banco de Oro represent about 74.4 percent of Equitable PCIBank, which, at P95 per share, amounts to over P51 billion.

Now, who among the local players would have that kind of ready cash?

Zobel premium

Bank of the Philippine Islands saved more than P34 million in executive compensation last year after the bank dropped its chair,

COCKTAILSVictor C.
Agustin

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, from the executive payroll.

According to the just-released BPI annual report, the 2004 compensation of the chair, president and CEO, and three other top officers amounted to P96.695 million.

The figure did not include the P10.505 million bonus handed out to the group.

The following year, despite the addition of one executive vice president, Adelbert Legasto, and one

senior vice president, Senen Matoto, the top executive compensation even dropped to P62.39 million.

The group bonus, however, increased to P18.08 million, on the strength of the bank's net income improving to P8.554 billion, from 2004's P6.887 billion.

In addition to Jaza having been dropped from the executive payroll, the year 2005 also marked the retirement of long-time president Xavier Lomaz and his replacement by Aurelio Montunola III.

As chair and board director, Jaza now has been reduced to receiving P1 million a year, just like what the other 14 BPI directors receive.

Heard through the grapevine
A POST OFFICE box shareholder

of Bacnotan Consolidated has just sold its 7.93-percent stake in the holding company for about P117 million.

Bacnotan president Ramon del Rosario Jr. swears he does not know the beneficial owner of the

seller, Supralex Holdings and Ventures Corp., except that its corporate nominee/front act is listed as a "Barbara Anne Migallos."

(Email: cocktails_pdi@pididsl.net or cocktails_pdi@yahoo.com)

PRULINK**PRU LIFE U.K.**

Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Mar 14, 2006	Last Week Mar 07 2006
Bond Fund - Peso	1,4047B	1,3969A
Managed Fund - Peso	1,52105	1,51419
Growth Fund - Peso	1,15094	1,14925
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1,2389	1,2359

Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

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BUSINESS

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006

Panlilio group to put up hotel

Boulevard Holdings to spend P91M for Puerto Galera project

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Francis Kong, best-selling author of "Only the Real Matters" and 10 other books; radio program host, Business Matters; and sought-after Motivational Speaker.



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Challenge #2: Rising from Great Manager to Great Leader. Marcus Buckingham (via special licensed video broadcast), author of management and leadership book "The One Thing You Need to Know," discusses what the world's best managers and leaders do differently.



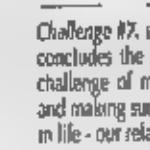
Challenge #3: Mastering the Keys to Achieving Your Goals. Top PLOT and Smart executive and movie producer Butch Ilmener shares how he sets and achieves his challenges.



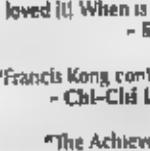
Challenge #4: Leading Through Adversity with Integrity. Sandy Prieto, CEO of The Philippine Daily Inquirer, shares the challenges of being "bullied" by political powers that threatened to close their business and shares how to get through challenges.



Challenge #5: Discovering the Servant Leader Within. Be inspired with one of UK's youngest millionaire entrepreneurs and now Gawad Kalinga's benefactor, Dylan Wilk, as he shows the strengths he sees in Filipinos and how they can be maximized to turn around the lives of Filipinos and of the country.



Challenge #6: Attitude Adjustment-Going from "Pweede Na!" to Excellence. Rex Resurrection, best-selling author of "Called to Excel" will challenge participants to rise from the mediocre, pweede-na attitude to an attitude of excellence.



Challenge #7: Life Balance. As a closing session, Francis Kong concludes the seminar by imparting success keys to meet the challenge of multi-tasking, leading our families harmoniously, and making sure we don't miss out on the most important things in life - our relationships.



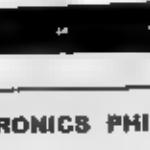
"We loved it! When is the next one so I can send my entire team?" - Stephen Misra, Microsoft

"Francis Kong continues to be the greatest speaker I know!" - Chi-Chi Laces, The Coca-Cola Export Corp.

"The Achievers & Leaders Seminar is excellent!" -Glenda So, Lucerne Jewelers



Challenge #8: Attitude Adjustment-Going from "Pweede Na!" to Excellence. Rex Resurrection, best-selling author of "Called to Excel" will challenge participants to rise from the mediocre, pweede-na attitude to an attitude of excellence.



Challenge #9: Life Balance. As a closing session, Francis Kong concludes the seminar by imparting success keys to meet the challenge of multi-tasking, leading our families harmoniously, and making sure we don't miss out on the most important things in life - our relationships.



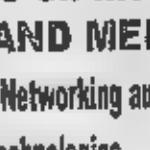
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Challenge #10: Attitude Adjustment-Going from "Pweede Na!" to Excellence. Rex Resurrection, best-selling author of "Called to Excel" will challenge participants to rise from the mediocre, pweede-na attitude to an attitude of excellence.



Challenge #11: Life Balance. As a closing session, Francis Kong concludes the seminar by imparting success keys to meet the challenge of multi-tasking, leading our families harmoniously, and making sure we don't miss out on the most important things in life - our relationships.



Challenge #12: Attitude Adjustment-Going from "Pweede Na!" to Excellence. Rex Resurrection, best-selling author of "Called to Excel" will challenge participants to rise from the mediocre, pweede-na attitude to an attitude of excellence.



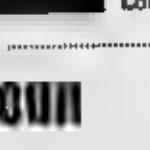
Challenge #13: Life Balance. As a closing session, Francis Kong concludes the seminar by imparting success keys to meet the challenge of multi-tasking, leading our families harmoniously, and making sure we don't miss out on the most important things in life - our relationships.



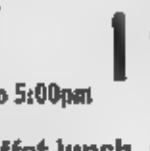
Challenge #14: Attitude Adjustment-Going from "Pweede Na!" to Excellence. Rex Resurrection, best-selling author of "Called to Excel" will challenge participants to rise from the mediocre, pweede-na attitude to an attitude of excellence.



Challenge #15: Life Balance. As a closing session, Francis Kong concludes the seminar by imparting success keys to meet the challenge of multi-tasking, leading our families harmoniously, and making sure we don't miss out on the most important things in life - our relationships.



Challenge #16: Attitude Adjustment-Going from "Pweede Na!" to Excellence. Rex Resurrection, best-selling author of "Called to Excel" will challenge participants to rise from the mediocre, pweede-na attitude to an attitude of excellence.



Challenge #17: Life Balance. As a closing session, Francis Kong concludes the seminar by imparting success keys to meet the challenge of multi-tasking, leading our families harmoniously, and making sure we don't miss out on the most important things in life - our relationships.



Challenge #18: Attitude Adjustment-Going from "Pweede Na!" to Excellence. Rex Resurrection, best-selling author of "Called to Excel" will challenge participants to rise from the mediocre, pweede-na attitude to an attitude of excellence.



Challenge #19: Life Balance. As a closing session, Francis Kong concludes the seminar by imparting success keys to meet the challenge of multi-tasking, leading our families harmoniously, and making sure we don't miss out on the most important things in life - our relationships.

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

BOULEVARD HOLDINGS Inc. of the Panlilio family is spending roughly P91 million for a new high-end boutique hotel in Bouquette Beach, Puerto Galera, in Mindoro.

Jose Marcel Panlilio, chair at Boulevard Holdings, told reporters after a briefing late Wednesday that groundbreaking for the 25-room hotel was scheduled for 2007.

The hotel, to be dubbed "Fridays Puerto Galera," will be its second resort hotel.

It will sit on a four-hectare property within a well-known dive, beach and lagoon destination in Mindoro.

"The most important factor here is BH's ability to take advantage of the most extensive land bank of beach destinations already bought 30 years or so ago by the family," Panlilio said.

Fridays Holdings is the owner and operator of Fridays Resort in Boracay.

The hotel has recently expanded to 47 luxurious rooms from 41 rooms.

Last year, occupancy rate at the Boracay hotel was at 95 percent versus the island's 65 percent.

In the next five years, Boulevard Holdings will expand Fridays Resort to 61 rooms.

Boulevard Holdings owns 77 percent of Fridays' Holdings and plans to buy out the rest of the shareholders this year.

Revenues from Fridays Resort is expected to grow to P145 million this year from P124 million last year or up 16.9 percent.

Boulevard Holdings is owned by the Panlilio Group of Companies, which operates one of the biggest local chains of hotels and resorts.

Estimates show between P100 billion to P150 billion worth of soured loans and foreclosed assets out of about P420 billion may be sold under special purpose vehicles.

The composite index added 13.86 points to 2,141.77. It traded between 2,127.91 and 2,147.27.

The broader all-shares index advanced 4.40 points to 1,040.07.

Volume reached 568.5 million shares worth P1.7 billion. Gainers outnumbered losers 50 to 35, while 49 stocks ended unchanged.

The peso averaged at 51.07 to the US dollar in midday trade.

PHILIPPINE STOCKS EXCHANGE

(As of March 10, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Banco de Oro Unib. Bank	35.00	35.25	35.00	35.35	374,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	67.50	68.00	67.50	68.00	1,650,900
Chang San Leong Co.	1.90	1.90	1.85	1.85	300
China Savings Bank	0.40	0.41	0.39	0.39	6,710,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	69.00	73.00	68.00	73.00	500,000
Equitable PCI Banking	26.00	28.00	26.50	25.50	5,000
International Exch. Bank	37.60	38.00	36.50	36.50	339,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31.00	32.00	31.50	32.00	45,800
Philippine National Bank	1.13	1.13	1.12	1.12	92,000
Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	72,000
Security Bank Corp.	0.89	0.90	0.87	0.87	18,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	1,200
Manulife Financial Corp.	32.40	32.60	32.40	32.40	340
Sun Life Financial Inc.	21.90	21.95	21.85	21.85	260
Vantage Corp.	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	2,490,000
INDUSTRIAL ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	42.00	42.00	41.00	42	14,380,500
First Phil. Holdings Corp.	40.00	41.00	39.85	41.25	329,900
Manila Electric Co. A	13.00	13.00	12.75	12.75	41,200
Manila Electric Co. B	19.75	20.00	19.75	20	755,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.40	6.50	6.40	6.50	1,564,000
Potron Corp.	4.95	4.95	4.95	4.95	1,037,000
East Asia Power Reg. Corp.	0.215	0.220	0.215	0.22	250,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.89	30,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	6,000
Globe & Sun Miguel Inc.	1.65	1.65	1.62	1.62	20,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	967,800
Palawan Milk Products Inc.	3.65	3.75	3.65	3.75	23,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.76	1.74	1.76	764,000
San Miguel Corp. A	6.10	6.10	6.00	6.00	81,000
San Miguel Corp. B	7.80	7.80	7.75	7.75	57,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.85	2.85	5,000
Philippine Brew. & Dist.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	3,000
Universal Robina Corp.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	901,000
Vitanrich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.30	0.31	0.29	0.29	9,521,000
Fortune Comport Corp.	0.20	0.20	0.19	0.19	120,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.45	4.45	4.35	4.45	2,474,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	200,000
Picross Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	4,600,000
Stenline Manufacturing	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.32	430,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacon Corp & Hold A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	5,000,000
Ayala Corp	342.5	345	342.5	345	159,390
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.0	58,900
Aboitiz Net Holdings	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.024	15,070,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.44	2.44	2.42	2.42	55,000
APC Gcupines	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	10,000,000
Arcoro Gold Res. Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	800,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.62	0.62			

BUSINESS

BSP tightens rules on dealings with banks, PDIC

Ensuring policies are consistent with mandate

By Doris C. Dumao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS HAS tightened the rules on its dealings, as a lender of last resort, with banks and Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

In a statement, BSP Governor Armando Tetangco Jr. said the policy-making Monetary Board had approved stiffer regulations on the BSP's rediscounting, emergency lending, overnight clearing line and lending to the PDIC.

"This is to ensure that the BSP's credit policies are consistent with its primary mandate, as a central monetary authority, to promote domestic price stability and support the stability of the financial system," Tetangco said.

The measures approved for the overnight clearing line and emergency loan facilities included the restoration of the regular evaluation process required to convert a temporary overdraft into an emergency loan; stricter definition of the preconditions, requirements and limits for the granting of emergency loans, and simplified collateral guidelines and rationalization of certain rules and procedures for greater transparency and efficiency.

For the rediscounting facility, the BSP tightened the requirements on documentation, standards for acceptability and valuation of collateral, and the eligibility criteria to focus on the borrowing bank's state of health.

Under the loan window for the PDIC, the BSP imposed preconditions for the granting of loans, particularly on the existence of systemic risk and consistency with monetary policy, more realistic loan limits and prescription of interest rates to cover at least the average cost of funds to the BSP.

The terms on the collateral, maturity and repayment period were likewise aligned with international best practices.

In a separate statement, PDIC president Ricardo Tan said PDIC was capable of paying its obligations to the BSP and that all financial assistance to distressed banks were granted after a prudent and judicious process coordinated with the BSP.

As of December 2005, PDIC reported total outstanding loans payable to BSP amounting to P73.1 billion. Tan said 60 percent or P43.9 billion had defined repayment sources while 40 percent was covered by promissory notes maturing within six to 43 years.

Thrift banks map out fund-raising strategies, plans

PHILIPPINE THRIFT BANKS ARE WORKING together in undertaking efforts to raise capital, such as tier 2 debt offering, private placement from new investors or merger with other banks.

In a press briefing, top officials of the Chamber of Thrift Banks said the association would map out during its annual convention in Baguio City today strategic courses of action to cope with stiffer capital adequacy requirements imposed by the International Accounting Standards and Basel 2.

"Owners of the banks will have to bring in more funds or get new investors," said Alfonso Salcedo, president of the country's biggest thrift bank BPI Family Bank and incoming president of CTB.

CTB, which groups the majority of the country's 84 thrift banks, plans to negotiate with investment banks for lower capital-raising fees.

"We also intend to help our smaller members who may find the costs of raising capital too high," said CTB executive director Suzanne Felix.

While thrift banks are now allowed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to raise funds through tier 2 or subordinated debt offering, only a few had so far tapped this option. Doris C. Dumao

Bingo operator eyes new investor

LEISURE AND RESORTS WORLD CORP. YES- terday said it was negotiating with a foreign investments holding company with assets in Asia for the sale of a 3.6-percent stake in the bingo operating company.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, LRWC said the prospective investor was involved in portfolio investment of strategic assets in Asia, with a particular focus on China, Korea, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

The investor is interested to buy 28.5 million shares of LRWC at between P1.74 and P1.84 a share. LRWC closed at P1.82 per share yesterday.

The shares under negotiation will come from the unissued portion of the authorized capital stock of LRWC.

LRWC and the prospective investor are in their final stages of negotiations. A deal is expected to be closed by the end of the month.

The final terms and conditions of the investment as well as any definitive agreement between LRWC and the prospective investors would be subject to the approval of their respective board of directors.

LRWC owns 100 percent of AB Leisure Exponent Inc. (popularly known as Bingo Bonanza), the operator of bingo parlors nationwide. Elizabeth L. Sanchez

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FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006

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Republic of the Philippines
DON HONORIO VENTURA COLLEGE of ARTS and TRADES
Bacolor, Pampanga

NOTICE OF VACANCY FOR COLLEGE PRESIDENT

The Board of Trustees of the DON HONORIO VENTURA COLLEGE OF ARTS AND TRADES (DHVCAT) Bacolor, Pampanga formally and publicly announces the Search for COLLEGE PRESIDENT per Board Resolution No. 2, s. 2006 dated February 8, 2006.

The minimum qualifications for the position are as follows:

1. must be a Filipino citizen
 2. preferably a holder of doctoral degree
 3. preferably between 35 to 61 years old
 4. must be morally upright
 5. with recognized leadership in his/her profession in the academic/industry
 6. with at least five (5) years of managerial/administrative experience
- Final application addressed to the Search Committee should be accompanied with the following:
1. Detailed curriculum vitae and certified supporting documents;
 2. Proposed Four Year Development Plan for the College consistent with the Vision, Mission and Thrusts of the College;
 3. Results of neuro-psychiatric examination conducted by any government physician or any accredited health institution;
 4. Medical Certificate from a government physician;
 5. National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Clearance;
 6. Ombudsman Clearance;
 7. Civil Service Commission Clearance/Certificate of No Pending Administrative Case issued by the Administrative Officer of present employer / or previous employer; and
 8. Certification of not being convicted in any administrative or criminal cases.

Interested applicants and/or those nominated for the position are requested to submit five (5) sets of documents in sealed envelopes to Ms. Evangeline S. Bondoc, Board Secretary, Don Honorio Ventura College of Arts and Trades, Bacolor, Pampanga on or before April 3, 2006.

CLASSIFIEDS

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NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. Adq. No. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that MA. ROSE VIRGINIA TAURAO VILLACARLOS has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from MARIA-ROSE VIRGINIA MA. ROSE VIRGINIA TAURAO and whose parents are SANTIAGO TAURAO and LEONILIA TAURAO.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his/her opposition with this Office not later than 27

PTD. March 10, 2006

(Sgd.) ELISEO T. TULIVA
Municipal Court Registrar



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Earth Day at the CCP

THE CULTURAL CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES (CCP) TEAMS UP WITH HARIBON FOUNDATION, Winner Foundation, the La Sallian Institute for the Environment (Life), the Philippine Tropical Forest Conservation Foundation (PTFC), Cycling Advocates (CYCADA), Organic Producers and Traders Association (OPTA) and GMA 7 for a whole-day package of activities celebrating Earth Day 2006 slated on April 22, Saturday, from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the CCP Liwasang Kalikasan. The day kicks off with a clean-up of the complex grounds by CCP employees and the opening of some 40 booths comprising the Earth Day Bazaar, with music by Edru Abraham's KontraGapi. The day unfolds with an on-the-spot art contest for kids, the flagdown of Cycling Advocates coming all the way from the Quezon Memorial Circle, and storytelling sessions under the trees. The day ends with a show of dance and music, highlighted by a fashion show of wearable art made from recycled and natural materials, designed by students of DLSU-College of Saint Benilde. The Liwasang Kalikasan is a lightly wooded area along Roxas Boulevard located on the north eastern side of the CCP Complex, to be transformed into an ecological showcase and venue for cultural and educational activities in an urban forest park setting. For more information, call the CCP Visual Arts and Museums Division at 832-3702.

OBITUARIES

JOSE "PEPE" JACINTO LOMOTAN

Died in the grace of our Lord on March 15, 2006
at the age of 86.

His loving wife MIGUEL A SEMPIO PASCUAL

Children, in-laws and grandchildren
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ANJO, JOEL and BEN

FROLAN and BETH ESGUERRA
FRANCESCA, ALEXA and ERICA

and sister

LUTGARDA (LETTY)

request relatives and friends to join them in prayers
for his eternal repose.

His remains lie in state at the Capilla De San Francisco,
Sanctuario de San Antonio,
McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, March 18, 2006
at 8:30 a.m. Mass to be followed by cremation.

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St. Francis de Paola Parish Church - Mabini, Batangas

San Isidro Labrador Parish - Bo. San Isidro, Batangas City

St. James the Greater Parish - Ibaan, Batangas

St. Michael the Archangel Parish Church - Ibaan, Batangas City

San Roque Parish Church - Lemery, Batangas

We, his family, request relatives, friends and dear readers to join us in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.



FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006

PAL earnings seen up despite higher cost

Increased passenger traffic a big boost

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST AIRLINE WILL likely report marginally higher earnings for its fiscal year 2005 ending on March 31, as higher passenger traffic helped offset increases in fuel costs.

Speaking to reporters on Wednesday night, Philippine Airlines president Jaime Bautista said the company would make "slightly more than the \$20 million posted last year."

PAL reports its financial statements to regulators in dollars as the bulk of its revenue is foreign currency-denominated.

Bautista said the airline—owned by tobacco and beer tycoon Lucio C. Tan—experienced a 4.8-percent increase in passenger traffic this year, helping offset the high cost of aviation fuel, which has pushed many of the world's largest airlines into the red.

On the average, PAL's fuel cost has risen by about 20 percent this year.

"Our net income is about the same [as last year] but we will have better results from operations," he said.

Bautista also said the airline was aiming at record-high profits in fiscal year 2006, ending March 2007, although he declined to provide more details.

The PAL chief said the airline was undergoing a refueling program whose aim was to completely replace its aging fleet of Boeing 737s for domestic operations.

The airline will take delivery of three short-to-medium-haul Airbus A319s this year, and another A319 early next year, all acquired through a lease program.

Bautista said PAL was aiming at having a fleet



BAUTISTA

of 18 A319s by the end of 2008, half of which to be leased with the rest to be bought outright.

PAL will need \$840 million for the refueling program, half of which will be borrowed from export credit agencies while the rest will be raised through commercial loans.

In line with efforts to boost revenues, Bautista said PAL would increase the number of flights to the United States.

Flights from Manila to Los Angeles will increase from the present nine to 10 a week, while those to San Francisco will increase from eight to nine a week.

Another flight to Beijing will also be added, bringing the weekly total to four.

He added that PAL's flights to Canada were also lucrative, but the airline could no longer add flights to Vancouver because it already used up all its entitlements under existing air agreements.

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Women farmers' new project

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

LAST MARCH 10, THE 29-year-old Samahang Kababaihang Barangay (KBB) and the Samahang Kababaihan Development Foundation (KBDF), composed mostly of grassroots women farmers, celebrated the first year anniversary of their newest program—the San Miguel, Bulacan Ten-Year Community Based Health Program (CBHP). This was done on the occasion of women's month and the birthday of the late Ka Emma Sta. Ana, their leader.

The CBHP is the KBB-KBDF partnership with the local government under the leadership of Mayor Edmundo Jose "Pop" Buencamino, the Physicians for Peace, and many other NGOs.

Community programs

Among the CBHP accomplishments reported by KBB president Gloria Manapoi were: 291 cataract and Pterygium surgeries performed with the help of the Sukob and the Bulacan Society of Ophthalmologists; Ka Ising Quizon and Ka Tindeng Manuson three-week trainers' training on the tuberculosis program sponsored by the Physicians for Peace; hospital equipment donated by the Physicians for Peace to support the rural health unit upgrading; 18,000 mango seedlings produced (in partnership with the municipal nursery), and 120 amputees screened and 40 prostheses (artificial legs) distributed.

In this year's Women's Month, the KBB identified three flagship agriculture projects that would help its new development thrust in health. These women farmers have gone from pigs (agriculture) to toys (small industry), to politics (good governance), and to health (with agriculture as a key component). These projects build on each other to complete an entire holistic approach. The KBB is using agriculture as a main tool to promote a good diet that is essential to good health. The three projects are malungay, mango, and dairy production.

Malungay is one of the most nutritious vegetables in the country, and is actively promoted by the Management Association of the Philippines' Agribusiness Foundation. It can easily be propagated as it grows easily without much need for maintenance. The KBB and KBDF will have contests to encourage participation and motivate performance.

COMMENTARY
pastilles de leche. However, San Miguel has to import its carabao milk from other provinces because they consume more than they can produce. What is more, the excess milk that will be produced under the program can be consumed by the community, contributing to its health program. This direction is consistent with an Agriwatch finding that, in many instances, it is more economical to produce dairy milk rather than import it.

Mango variety upgrading

The late Ka Emma Sta. Ana, in her time, led the KBB in planting one million mango trees in the members' backyards. The KBB succeeded. There are now mango buying stations in San Miguel and a big mango processing plant in Malolos that gets its supply mostly from San Miguel.

Last year, the KBB launched a mango variety upgrading program with the help of the DA's Philippine Mango Center. Already 18,000 mango seedlings have been grown and ready to be grafted to become mother trees. The target of the KBB is to raise 100,000 mango seedlings a year in the next 10 years.

Best women's program

The KBB is the same group that won the award from the United Nations for being the Best Rural Women's Project in Asia in 1984 and the Best Women's Development Project in the World in 1989.

The San Miguel, Bulacan Ten-Year Community Based Health Program is another step forward to promote the concept of building transformative communities. The project demonstrates how the community takes responsibility for their own health program. It is premised on the principle that health is a basic human right of every individual member of the community. It is the duty of everyone to do his share in making sure that the health of each person is looked after as a community responsibility. For more information on this, please call KBB's ka Tindeng Manuson (044-6780609).

Added note

Congratulations to Inday Campo, president of All Community Based Forestry Management Agreement (CBFMA) People Organizations in the Philippines covering 2.2 million hectares. Last March 13, Natural Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes immediately acted positively on her strong stand that all automatic CBFMA cancellations ordered by other officials be stopped. Called to DENR officials, Campo has shown the effectiveness of a true woman farmer leader during this women's month of March.

(The author is Agriwatch chair. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)

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BD People, Events & Products

Jewelmer director learns about working in RP

PIERRE FALLOURD, TQM AND ASSISTANT managing director for Jewelmer, could have insisted that his knowledge and western expertise were enough to equip him to work in the Philippines. But like any executive worth his salt, he recognized that to gain better mileage, he needed to tailor-fit what he knew to the environment he found himself in.

Pierre has traveled in and out of the country for the past seven years. He was finally asked to settle in the Philippines with the objective of "applying his knowledge and experience in Europe into the Asian setting."

The decision to work and settle here however was not an easy one to make for Pierre. He knew he had to adjust and synergize his personal capabilities with the way things are done locally.

It was on the road to assimilating the local culture that Pierre came across the Executive Master in Business Administration program of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM). The president of Jewelmer International, Manuel Conjuangco, who was himself a Triple A awardee of AIM, highly recommended it.

With the support of management, Pierre availed himself of the opportunity for further studies. Despite juggling responsibilities at work with the demands of the program, he acknowledged that the time and effort put into it was well worth it. To him, "the AIM-EMBA offered an excellent advantage because of good professors who provided sound theory grounded on practice. While presenting a

global perspective on business, they helped me understand the local and regional culture."

Pierre's opportunity to test and actually practice this style of leadership came when he implemented his Strategic Management Project or SMP—a unique feature of the Executive MBA Program which required participants to implement a breakthrough business improvement within the organization.

For him, the SMP was a realistic endeavor for the reason that it required a tripartite agreement between the company, school and the student. And because it was executed within the duration of the EMBA, close monitoring allowed for the results to be visible.

The regular meetings conducted to ensure the effective implementation of the SMP became a venue for Pierre to convey ideas and enlist the team members' support and participation in the project. The close interaction with his team members allowed him to put into practice the things he learned about better communication and working within the local culture.

Where quantifiable results and financial success should have been enough, Pierre went beyond that and came to an appreciation of success becoming more significant when relationships are given importance as well. "There is more to business than just a successful transaction, the quality of the relationships with co-workers/client/employees are actually more important than strictly the financial aspects."

The 8th batch of the EMBA will commence on April 17 in Manila. Call Mely Jimenez or Grace Reynoso at 892-4011 for more information about the program.



SM DONATES P3M TO VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTERS

SM Investments Corp., the publicly listed holding company of the SM Group, recently turned over P3 million to the Association of Volunteer Fire Chiefs and Fire Fighters of the Philippines. Since its establishment in 1987, the Association of Fire Chiefs and Firefighters of the Philippines Inc has played a major role in minimizing the loss of lives and properties from fires and disasters. Since that time, the association has already grown to 38 brigades with more than a hundred fire trucks and ambulances, and more than 1,800 firefighters and paramedics. The Association was also the first to activate a region-wide emergency telephone reporting system through hotline 15016. In recognition of its efforts, Manila Mayor Lito

Alenza donated a 1,000-sqm lot at the Manila Harbour Center to establish their headquarters. SM's donation will be used to put up a basketball gymnasium in the new building. Shown is SM Prime Holding president Hans Sy (center) handing over the check to the Association during the recent turnover. With him are the Association's senior executive advisers Samuel Chan and Robert Yu, executive VP Mary Ng, SM Investment executive VP and CFO Jose Sio, the Association's lifetime honorary president George Go Pen Siong, senior executive adviser Alonso Uy, vice president Lorenzo Ku, board chair Jose Go, senior executive adviser Benito Chua and vice president Sy Guo Fen.

'LakBYKE Mabuhay Tour' pedals to true identity

ANYWHERE YOU GO, THERE'S A PILIPINO making others realize that the Philippines, with its culture and identity, is filled with so many things its people can be truly proud of and be happy with.

This is what the "Galing Pilipino Movement" (GPM) is all about. GPM is a non-profit, private sector initiative that affirms and recognizes what is good and excellent in being Filipino, propagates a different brand of heroism—the kind that happens everyday. GPM's campaign is aimed to raise Filipino pride and heighten our collective dignity. The campaign was founded by a group of Filipinos led by Erlinda de Guzman.

A bunch of young, active and nationalistic Filipinos realized that one of the gravest problems faced by the Philippines today is Filipinos not believing in their nationality

and doubting their identity.

Thus, the "LakBYKE Mabuhay Tour" was born, which aims to constantly remind Filipinos that we are tough, resilient, and exceptional.

The "LakBYKE Mabuhay Tour" commemorates the Fall of Bataan (Death March) in reverse and appreciating the courage showed by the Filipino soldiers in the last World War II. History books do not highlight enough the great story of the Battle of Bataan, wherein a historic allegiance between Filipinos and Americans was forged.

The "LakBYKE Mabuhay Tour" from April 5 to 8 will be a fresh interpretation of the Death March through a biking experience. There will be send-off and welcome ceremonies at the starting line and at all stops. In contrast to the Death March where the number of marchers decreased day to day, this time bikers from communities along the route will be encouraged to join so that the size of the group will increase from town to town. Historical markers along the route will be visited, with simple rites.

The LakBYKE Mabuhay Tour is an educational-cultural bike tour starting from Capas, Tarlac, passing through San Fernando in Pampanga, towards Mariveles in Bataan, with culminating activities and celebrations in Balanga,

Bataan.

At each stop-over, local festivities will be organized, highlighting the unique "Galing Pilipino" practices in the area in terms of culture, food, traditions, and historical significance. Cyclist groups will be invited to participate in this non-competitive, fun tour with pocket activities for each site stop-over, namely Eco-Agro Tourism, Bisita Pilipinas, Natural Farming Seminar, Yugoy Yugoy Tugtug Pinoy, and ends with a grand celebration in Balanga, Bataan.

Eco-agro tourism, including GPM's program Bisita Pilipinas, opens to tourists the opportunity to stay in environment friendly ecological farms or country estates, and camping grounds.

Through the Galing Pilipino project aims to promote the rich musical culture of Filipinos by promoting the use of various local ethnic instruments.

For more details on GPM's various programs and projects, membership details, and to know more about the LakBYKE Mabuhay Tour, log on to www.galingpilipino.org or call 631-3932, 0917-8354829, 0916-2546069, or fax 633-1089.

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All Thule roof racks and boxes are waterproof and theft proof. The aerodynamic design provides a sleek look to the vehicle. Shown is a Toyota RAV4 equipped with a Thule roof rack. For more information on how to gear up and make your vacation a more adventurous one, load up and visit its display at Toyota Pasong Tamo or the Thule-EGR showrooms in Ortigas Avenue (744-6367) and Pasong Tamo (892-7847), or log on to www.thule.com.

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Visa pushes electronic payment systems

DAVAO CITY—MINDANAO'S TRADE AND tourism would get a big boost if more establishments would adopt electronic payment systems, payment processing and card company Visa International said.

James Dixon, Visa country manager for the Philippines, said here that a growing number of people now want to pay for their purchases using the electronic payment system because it is a safer alternative to carrying cash.

Dixon said business establishments in Mindanao could cash in on the electronic payment system if they offered it to the public, tourists especially.

For example, a traveler visiting Mindanao would either get traveler's checks or bring huge amounts of cash because of the lack of merchants using the electronic payment system, Dixon said.

He said merchants could exploit the spending habit of tourists who were more comfortable using their credit cards than

paying in cash.

Dixon said a Visa study showed that tourists preferred to settle their bills using the electronic payment system.

The cards also do away with the problem of exchanging foreign currencies for pesos.

He said that in 2005 alone, spending by tourists through the Visa electronic payment system reached P50 billion, or an increase of 46 percent from the previous year.

"It is estimated that 35 percent of tourist spend is made using a Visa card," he said.

Visa offers various options for its electronic payment system - the credit card, debit card and the prepaid card.

"It's easier to get a resort reservation with the system and easier to make payments, too," Dixon said. Dennis Jay C. Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Sarangani farmers earn from contract growing

By Aquiles Z. Zomio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

MAASIM, SARANGANI PROVINCE—

"I thought I was only dreaming," said Pring Malo, a B'laan farmer who earlier leased his 1.9-hectare land to pineapple giant Dole Philippines Inc. (Dolefil), as he looked at the bundle of bills in his hand.

It was the first time Malo held such a large amount—P121,000 in cash. His biggest income since he started farming was less than P10,000 per season.

Malo, a father of six, was the first pineapple contract grower to harvest in situ Tahakayo in Ansipit village here.

Just two years ago, his life in the area was a nightmare.

His family could hardly eat three

meals a day. Most of the time, they subsisted on root crops.

His luck changed when he learned of Dolefil's plan to expand operations in the area.

Malo entered into a lease contract with the pineapple firm, under which Dolefil rented his land for P10,000 a hectare a year.

He was allowed to till his land, give financing and a pledge that Dolefil would buy his harvest.

His first income from contract growing reached P444,000.

Minus the expenses and cash advances he got from the pineapple giant, Malo's net income was P121,000.

The transformation of Malo's place into a pineapple field started in 2003

when Mayor Anecito Lopez Jr. and future governor Miguel Dominguez met with Elvys Dee, former Dolefil top executive.

When Dee hinted that Dolefil was planning to expand, Lopez immediately offered Maasim as a possible site.

Dolefil started its expansion project in the province sometime in April 2004.

Now, the pineapple company has more than 400 hectares planted to pineapple in the village, with about 91 contract growers, including Malo.

The company had said it still wanted to expand.

For other villagers, that was good news for they too want to earn as much as Malo.

NEA bucks debt deal

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—The National Electrification Administration (NEA) said the conversion of electric cooperatives into stock cooperatives or stock corporations would mean the revocation of the government's condonation of their loans.

In a legal advisory on Feb. 16 that was released recently, the NEA said electric cooperatives that chose to convert within 10 years from 2003 would risk repaying their loans to the NEA that had been assumed by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm).

NEA's advisory said the conversion into a stock entity of an electric cooperative was considered an act of transfer of ownership, and this would mean that the cooperative would have to resume paying its loans. Delmar Carujo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Makati City, Metro Manila

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

April 6, 2006

To The Stockholders:

Pursuant to Article IV of the Amended By-Laws of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of BPI will be held at the Grand Ballroom, Hotel Inter-Continental, Makati City, Metro Manila, on Thursday, April 6, 2006, at 9:00 A.M., for the transaction of the following business:

1. Calling of Meeting to Order
2. Certification of Notice.
3. Determination and Declaration of Quorum.
4. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders on April 7, 2005 and the Special Meeting on November 11, 2005.
5. Reading of Annual Report and approval of the Bank's Statement of Condition as of December 31, 2005 incorporated in the Annual Report.
6. Approval and Confirmation of all Acts during the past year of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and all other Board and Management Committees and Officers of BPI.
7. Election of 15 Members of the Board of Directors.
8. Election of External Auditors and Fixing their Remuneration.
9. Declaration of Stock Dividend.
10. Directors' Bonus.
11. Other Matters.

In accordance with Article XII of the said By-Laws, the Stock and Transfer Book of BPI will be closed from March 7, 2006 to April 6, 2006. Only Stockholders of record as of March 7, 2006 will be entitled to notice and to vote at the said meeting.

If it will be inconvenient for you to attend the meeting, you may at your option, appoint another person to represent you thereat by means of a proxy, which should be submitted to the Office of the Corporate Secretary of BPI, 19th Floor, BPI Building, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Metro Manila, not later than 5:00 P.M. of March 27, 2006. Validation of proxies shall be held at the same office on March 29, 2006 at 4:00 P.M.

When signing as attorney-in-fact, executor, administrator, guardian, or in any other representative capacity, please give full title and file papers showing your authority.

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(Sgd.) CARLOS B. AQUINO
Vice President &
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Date: April 7 (Friday) & April 8 (Saturday)

Time: 9 AM to 6 PM

Venue: Caribbean Rm., Cebu Waterfront Hotel

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BUSINESS

Commercial lending up

By Doris C. Dumiao

COMMERCIAL LENDING PICKED UP by 3 percent in January from last year on higher demand by financial institutions and real estate firms, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

The lending growth posted in January, which brought outstanding commercial loans to P1.56 trillion, was an improvement from the marginal 0.9-percent rise in December.

The financial institutions, real estate and business services sector posted the biggest loan growth of 19.3 percent, followed by the community, social and

personal services sector (7.6 percent) and the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector (7.4 percent).

But the BSP reported a drop in lending to other key sectors, such as construction (15.2 percent), mining and quarrying (9.1 percent); electricity, gas and water (7.5 percent) and manufacturing (7.4 percent).

There was likewise a decline in outstanding loans to wholesale and retail trade (4.7 percent) and the transportation, storage and communication sectors (4.4 percent).

"Commercial bank lending activity remains moderate as a result of pre-

vailing high levels of nonperforming loans (NPLs) and the resulting cautious lending stance of most commercial banks as well as sluggish corporate demand," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said.

He said the BSP remained focused on its efforts to strengthen overall asset quality in the banking sector as a means of encouraging lending activity to the real sector.

Earlier this week, Congress passed a bill reviving the Special Purpose Vehicle Law, which aims to clean up the banking system's bad assets through fiscal incentives in asset transfers.



NEW ZEALAND Prime Minister Helen Clark on Thursday visited San Miguel Corp.'s headquarters in Mandaluyong City. Ms Clark was welcomed by SMC chair and CEO Eduardo Coquango Jr. (right) and SMC president and COO Ramon S. Ang. SMC has investments in Australia and New Zealand through its subsidiaries.

DOF fears impact of bill on perks

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN that the fiscal incentives rationalization bill passed by Congress would not stem huge revenue losses from generous tax perks, and could even lead to an increase in foregone taxes.

The DOF therefore is preparing its own draft of the rationalization plan, which it would submit to the Senate, in the hope that the upper chamber would adopt it.

According to DOF estimates, the government loses about P300 billion a year in potential revenues due to the granting of fiscal incentives, including tax and duty exemptions granted to enterprises in priority industries.

Businesses enjoying fiscal incentives include those registered with the Board of Investments and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

The source said the DOF has yet to finish computing the impact of the House bill, but said initial indications showed that it would lead to revenue losses.

The finance official said one provision of the house bill that the DOF wanted amended was the granting of a maximum 20-year income tax holiday to enterprises covered by the Investment Priorities Plan (IPP).

The official said that while the House bill would achieve the purpose of consolidating several fiscal-incentives laws into one, it would defeat the government's objective of arresting huge foregone revenues because incentives were hardly reduced.

The source said the DOF would likewise push for the creation of an inter-agency body to serve as the policy maker on the granting of fiscal incentives.

The House bill, which adopted provisions of the bill proposed by the BOI, the BOI will be the policy-making body and administrator of the fiscal incentives at the same time.

The DOF prefers an inter-agency body rather than a single office to handle policy-making matters related to fiscal incentives to balance the interest of concerned government agencies.

Gov't to keep trade policies

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE COUNTRY IS LEAVING BEHIND AN OLD economy and political order to push ahead as part of a globalized world economy, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said.

Speaking before a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Council of American Chambers of Commerce, Ms Arroyo blasted local interest groups that oppose the country's active participation in world trade as well as those against her administration.

The President said these people were clinging to discredited economic thoughts.

"I am committed to micro-finance and entrepreneurship, not micromanagement," she said. "I am for good jobs, not mindless mobs."

Answering the Apacac meeting's theme "Is the world really flat?", the Chief Executive said "Yes," adding that the government was sustaining efforts to make the economy conducive to business and investment.

The theme alludes to the bestselling book by New York Times columnist Thomas L. Friedman that espoused free trade and globalization.

But Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said that world was not flat enough for him.

Focusing on current efforts in the World Trade Organization on a new round of negotiations, Favila said, "flat" world was one where each economy could operate within the same rules simply because each players was just as strong as the next one.

The trade chief added that the government would continue to take steps in ensuring that trade with other economies were "fair" for Filipinos, saying it would only agree on tariff reduction provided that developed countries remove trade practices like subsidies on local producers.

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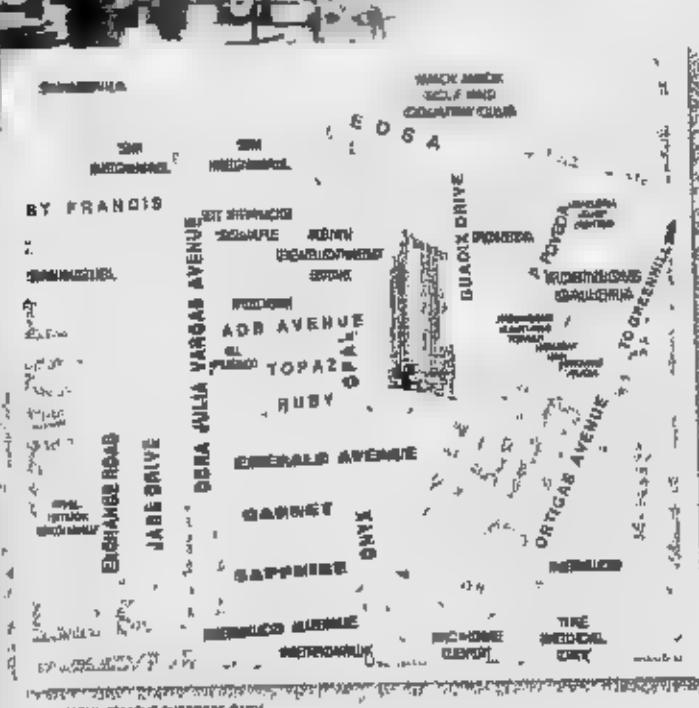


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BUSINESS Friday

She'd rather get customers than job offers

Average student who dabbles in dog food and sugarcane juice wins marketing tilt.



ROSLYN CHUA (right), 21, a graduating management student of Ateneo de Manila University, raises her glass after hearing her name called out as batch valedictorian in the 2006 Agora Youth Awards, which recognizes outstanding marketing students. In photo are the other winners: (from left) national finalist Vivien Betsy Fuentebella of Southville Foreign Colleges, and Marla Kris Llanes, also from Ateneo.

AT 21, ROSLYN Chua confesses she has "not won anything" in her life, not even a raffle prize. She also has a habit of dousing every hot praise "I'm just an average student from an average family."

The graduating student of Ateneo de Manila University, however,

is big on not ideas. And these ideas are what made her stand out among more than 100 other students all over the country who vied for the recently held 2006 Agora Youth Awards mounted by the Philippine Marketing Association (PMA), the umbrella organization of marketing practitioners in the country. The awards recognize the best and the brightest marketing students and organizations today.

Roslyn, a BS Management major with a minor on Entrepreneurship, was named valedictorian among seven national winners for breezing her way through case studies—from dog food to a local portal. Her income-generating marketing strategy for Yehey.com to facilitate online payment transactions for government agencies clinched her the title.

SHE'D RATHER/ B2-2

Social marketing is brand's key to success

LONG BEFORE CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) or good corporate citizenship became a byword in big business, one company was already using it as a novel way to develop a brand.

It was along that groove that Procter & Gamble Philippines launched the country's first antibacterial soap with skin germ protection—Safeguard—in 1966, when all other toilet and bath soaps were being positioned in the market for their cosmetic benefits. Over the years it paired opportunity with responsibility by following a brand development strategy that promoted better health and hygiene for Filipinos.

This could be gleaned from Safeguard's TV commercials popularized by lines as "konsensya" and "superior skin germ protection" and later by testimonials from the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists (Pamec) in 1990. This then progressed into health and hygiene advocacy with professional health experts and organizations supporting the brand.

Forty years down the road, Safeguard has become the best-selling soap in the country as it continues with this line of advertising and social marketing.

"We at Procter & Gamble, through Safeguard, have made the promotion of good hygiene habits among Filipinos a priority. Safeguard's vision is to help make a healthier nation. We have been single-minded in our educational message: Practicing proper hygiene habits, with soap that provides superior protection against germs, helps families stay healthy," said John Cua, P&G president and general manager when the firm launched a nationwide educational road show to promote hygiene in 2002.

Recent studies show some 3.5 million children below five years old die annually from respiratory and diarrheal illnesses, and simple hand washing with soap can reduce the cases by half.

This revelation came from Dr. Valerie Curtis of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Dr. Anna Bowen of the Foodborne and Diarrhea Diseases Branch of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia.

Curtis and Bowen were among the speakers at the Safeguard-sponsored 2nd International Health and Hygiene Symposium, one of the activities marking the brand's 40 years in the Philippines.

As Bowen reported, most of the deaths occurred in the world's less developed regions. "However, when a very simple and inexpensive intervention, hand washing with soap, is introduced, studies have shown a reduction of up to 40-50 percent in diarrheal and respiratory illnesses," Bowen said. "This means that hand washing, as a very technically simple and low cost health intervention, could improve the lives of millions of people around the world."

But teaching about proper hand washing is very difficult.

"Interventions designed to promote hand washing are often expensive, labor-intensive and time-consuming," Bowen pointed out.

Safeguard developed plans to reach the grassroots and turn the good news into a good habit.

Safeguard partnered with Pamec in 1984 and with the United Nations Children Emergency Fund (Unicef), the Department of Health (DOH), and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) to launch the Kalibisan, Kaustugan, Kaularan (KKK) in 1997. Making the KKK effort bigger, 1999 saw the inclusion of more partners—the Philippine Hospital Association, the Philippine Medical Association, and the National Confederation of Health Workers.

KKK aimed to reduce the incidence of diseases through practice of the Three Steps to Good Health (hand washing, bathing, and keeping the surroundings clean).

Safeguard partnered with the Unicef in the same year for a water sanitation project that provided 190 water supply systems and 500 toilet facilities for some 65,000 Filipinos.

To further equip the people even without water and wherever they could be, Safeguard introduced its hand sanitizer and deodorant products in 2000. In 2002, it rolled out a school program that educated four million children nationwide on the importance of frequent bathing and hand washing. In 2003, Safeguard and Unicef launched the Handog 2big Operation to provide water and sanitation facilities to 21 schools in 11 provinces.

Forty years and 10 variants later, Safeguard still promotes health and hygiene.

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Aveo 1.5 A/T	610,000	69,000	48,166	33,005	25,595	18,214	14,592	12,715	7,310
Optra 1.6 L M/T	550,000	89,000	49,946	34,225	26,541	18,888	15,131	13,185	7,790
Optra 1.6 L A/T	695,000	89,000	54,042	37,032	28,717	20,436	16,372	14,266	8,341
Optra 1.6 LS M/T	724,000	89,000	56,535	38,740	30,042	21,379	17,127	14,924	8,676
Optra 1.6 LS A/T	770,000	89,000	60,630	41,546	32,218	22,928	18,367	16,005	9,228



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RP wins gold at Asia Ad Awards

By Angel Guerrero
Contributor

JWT MANILA SCORED A RARE gold in the print category for their Greenpeace "Trees" ad at the Asia Pacific Advertising Festival held in the resort town of Pattaya in Thailand on March 9-11, 2006.

The winning ad competed against 1,396 print entries from ad agencies throughout the Asia Pacific region. Only five golds were awarded in print—two were won by BBDO Bangkok, one each by Creative Juice G1 Bangkok, Saatchi & Saatchi Singapore and JWT Manila.

This is the Philippines best showing ever at the ad festival, now on its ninth year. Only two Philippine ad agencies—JWT and BBDO Guerrero Ortega scored medals at the regional show, dubbed as the "Cannes of Asia."

JWT also got two silvers, one in outdoor for the same Greenpeace poster, and one in film for the Consuelo Foundation/Unicef "Bunso" TV commercial by BBDO. BBDO won a bronze in print for the Childhope "Fire Place" print ad.

The Philippines' previous big haul was in 2002 when the McDonald's "Lolo" TV commercial by Leo Burnett won a gold and BBDO Guerrero Ortega's Visa "Dining Out" TV commercial took a bronze. Subsequent years saw a

few bronzes for the country.

Shortlisted this year were Y&R's Palmer Asia Fire Distinguisher "Fire Truck" print ad, McCann-Erickson's Vaseline "Itchy Scalp" print ad, BBDO's Childhope Christmas Chalk Series print campaign, and the Lamy Pens "Lam-Ang" poster by BBDO DO.

David Ferrer, BCD of JWT and Joey Ong, senior art director at JWT Manila had the privilege of going up on stage twice for their Gold and Silver Lotus Crystal Ball awards.

Joey Ong said that the idea for the ad came to him after he got distressed when he saw cut logs floating while he was on a surfing trip in Siargao. Since he could not commit his time as a Greenpeace volunteer, he opted to do this campaign for them.

At the judges forum at the Adfest, the Greenpeace ad was one of the ads put up for discussion and was a popular choice by the jury.

The work was praised for its simplicity, and described as an "obvious idea just waiting to happen." David Guerrero, chairman and chief creative of BBDO Guer-

tero Ortega was chair of the print jury.

Matt Seddon, vice chairman of JWT Manila, flew in from Manila to support his team on awards night. Over 35 delegates from Manila's ad industry, the highest attendance ever at the festival, witnessed the event.

Thailand was the most awarded country with 65 awards, Singapore a distant second with 29 and Tokyo third with 25. Agency of the Year with most number of awards was BBDO Bangkok with 20 followed by Dentsu Tokyo with 18.

Young Lotus Awards was won by the team from Korea for their campaign to promote the Adfest. 13 young creative teams competed including Philippine representatives from Harrison Communications Jao Bautista and Dan Matutina.

The three-day event saw 183 awards from a record 4,738 entries submitted by 400 agencies in 34 cities. Over 1,400 delegates attended from junior creatives, regional creative directors, production houses, agency management and advertisers.



Creative execs of JWT David Ferrer, and Joey Ong with their Gold and Silver Lotus Crystal Ball awards.

She'd rather...

From page B2-1

Quizzed by one of the judges if dealing with government is such a bad idea considering the bureaucracy and corruption, Roslyn says she replied: "But somebody's got to do it anyway."

Not like the "average student" who constantly tugs at daddy's purse strings for baon, Roslyn knows this early how to make one's own money and be at the mercy of bureaucracy. Like many young people who have chosen the path of the self-employed, she had suffered the long wait and the long walks back and forth government office buildings to set up a company she can call her own.

At 21, Roslyn single-handedly negotiated with a group of Singaporeans for the buyout of a million-peso sugarcane juice producer, later incorporated as Healthifstyle Inc. Barely two months old, her company now leases machines and supplies sugarcane juice straight out of farms in Pampanga and Batangas to nine big restaurants.

"I am the company's entire value chain—from the farm, to delivery, to marketing and PR," Roslyn says. "I befriend all the waiters and provide marketing collateral support to my clients." And in between juggling work and school, she hones her marketing skills by attending workshops and joining competitions such as the Agora Youth Awards.

When Awards guest speaker Butch Jimenez, head of media and strategic communications of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., spoke of having a strong work ethic, Roslyn nodded in full agreement. "I am no stranger to hard work, having a dad who started his office and school supplies business when he was still a working student." She considers her father, Rosendo Chua, as her role model and "my financier," while mother Edilyn is her biggest fan.

Winning the plumb title in the Agora Youth Awards "mean we are being recognized, not for the good things we did, but for our potential to do great," Roslyn says in her acceptance speech. At this point, she says she would prefer "getting customers than job offers" as she plans to focus on growing her start-up beverage company after graduation.

Roslyn now joins a long roster of winners since the Agora Youth Awards began in 1991. The awards, formerly called the Tomas Toma Ten Outstanding Marketing Students and Three Outstanding Students Marketing Association, was inspired by the prestigious Agora Awards that select the best among marketing professionals and academics. To date, the Agora Youth Awards has already recognized over 100 outstanding marketing students nationwide.

Aside from Roslyn, other national winners were: Reynaldo H. Gabunada Jr. and Maria Kris Ann A. Llanes, both from Ateneo; Joseph Albert R. Buddahum from the University of the Philippines-Diliman; Isabella P. Cainglet and Michelle V. Grejaldo from the University of the Philippines-Visayas; and AR. B. Polinar from New Era University. National finalists were Jocno V. Nabor from Central Luzon State University, Stephen V. Rajardo from Mindanao State University-IT, Vivien Betsy B. Fuente from Southville Foreign Colleges, and Nathaniel K. Sy from Chiang Kai Shek College.

Recognized as having the best student marketing organizations were: the Ateneo de Manila University, UP-Diliman, San Beda College, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, and the Marketing Society Inc. of UP Visayas.

This year's judges were: Emerito de Guzman, president of Personnel Management Association of the Philippines; Tomas Bangui, president of the Philippine Marketing Association; Donald Lim, president and CEO of Yehey.com; Jade Talio, vice president for marketing of HBC; Wenfile Chan, VP for marketing of Nestle Ice Cream; and Cindy Banaria, assistant vice president for sales of Nestle Ice Cream. National winners received cash prizes and trophies.

DCI INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The DBP Data Center, Inc. (DCI) is Inviting interested suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of Information Technology Equipment and Services

Lot	Description	Budget, 12% VAT Inclusive
A	Supply of 6 EDGE switches and 2 CORE switches and software with installation and customization services	PhP 1,800,000.00
B	Supply and Installation of Structured Cabling (406 nodes)	PhP 1,500,000.00

Schedule of Activities

Issuance of Eligibility Requirements	March 13 to 20, 2006
Submission of Eligibility Requirements	March 24, 2006 at 2:00 pm
Issuance of Bid Documents to Eligible Suppliers	March 28, 2006
Pre-Bidding Conference	March 30, 2006 at 2:00 pm
Deadline for Submission of Questions	March 31, 2006 at 5:00 pm
Response to Submitted Questions	April 4, 2006 at 5:00 pm
Submission and Opening of Technical and Financial Proposals at 2:00 pm of date specified	For Lot A on April 12, 2006 For Lot B on April 18, 2006
Issuance of Notice of Award	For Lot A on April 19, 2006 For Lot B on April 28, 2006

Application for eligibility check is open to suppliers registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission/Department of Trade and Industry and have been engaged in the Supply, Delivery and Installation of Information Technology Equipment for at least three (3) years and must be at least 60% Filipino owned (for partnership and corporations).

Interested suppliers may secure the Eligibility Requirement Form from the BAC Secretariat c/o Ms. Rosalyn Tañagras (Phone 848-0277) at the 22nd floor, Pacific Star Building, Senator Gil Puyat Avenue corner Makati Avenue, Makati City.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A).

The DBP Data Center, Inc. reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any required formality therein and award to the bidder whose bid is most advantageous to this Government-owned and Controlled Corporation.

(PDI-March 10 & 17, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines ALABANG - STO. TOMAS DEVELOPMENT INC.

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Alabang - Sto. Tomas Development Inc. (ASDI), through the Philippine Infrastructure Corporation (PIC) - Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) per Republic Act No. 9184, invites local and/or foreign consultants to apply for eligibility and shortlisting and to bid for the project hereunder found eligible and authorized, to bid for the project hereunder

Name of Project: Consultancy Services for the Preparation of Detailed Engineering Design for the Daang Hari - SLEX Link Road Project

Brief Description: The Daang Hari - SLEX Link Road Project is a proposed toll road, with an approximate length of 3.85 km., that would link the existing Daang Hari in Bacoor, Cavite and the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) near the Sucat Interchange. The Detailed Engineering Design for the Project shall include, but not be limited to, the following: validation of initial survey works and preliminary design, preparation of cost estimates and generation of construction drawings, preparation of technical reports and tender documents for the EPC contract. The consultancy team shall include, but not be limited to, the following: Key Staff: Project Manager / Team Leader, Highway Engineer, Toll Collection System & Toll Operations Specialist, Connection/Interfacial Facility Design Specialist, Other Key Staff: Bridge/Structural Engineers, Hydrogeologist/Drainage Engineer, Geotechnical Engineer, Electrical Engineer, Traffic Engineer, Geologic/Survey Expert, IT Specialist, Materials/Pavement Engineer, Geodetic Engineer, Contracts Engineer/Document Specialist, Cost Engineer and Specifications Engineer.

To be eligible to participate in this bidding, the Consultant must have experience in the preparation of Detailed Engineering Design for a Toll Road Project.

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC): PhP16,000,000.00. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected.

Source of Funding: Alabang - Sto. Tomas Development, Inc. Corporate Funds

Contract Duration: 80 calendar days

The list of minimum requirements is indicated in the Pre-qualification Information and Consultants Eligibility Forms. Eligibility of prospective bidders shall be checked using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Shortlisting of eligible consultants will be done based on the following criteria: experience of the consultant, qualification of personnel who may be assigned for consulting services and job experience. The evaluation procedure to be adopted shall be Quality-Cost Based Evaluation (QCBE). The technical and financial proposals shall be given corresponding weights with the technical proposals given a weight of 80% and financial proposals given a weight of 10%. Their total weighted percentage shall be equal to 100%. The provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations relative to the bidding and award of contract including implementation shall apply.

The Pre-qualification Information and Consultant's Eligibility Forms will be available at the PIC Office, 7/F Adamson Centre, L.P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City, Philippines. Tel. Nos. 812-3023, 812-3610 and Fax No. 882-0143 upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PhP2,000 to the Philippine Infrastructure Corporation. Deadline for submission of the letter of intent and eligibility documents shall be on March 22, 2006, 12:00 noon. Late submission will not be entertained.

Bid Documents will be available only to shortlisted bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PhP20,000 to the Philippine Infrastructure Corporation.

The ASDI reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any dated or any formally signed, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any consultant whose bid is evaluated to be more advantageous to the ASDI and the Government. Furthermore, the ASDI assumes no responsibility whatsoever for compensation or indemnity to the bidders for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) ANGELITO G. RAMOS
PIC-SBAC Chairman

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT COUNCIL FOR WELFARE OF CHILDREN



INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Council for the Welfare of Children invites registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

Item/Description	Approved Budget for the	Pre-Bid Conference Contract	Deadline/Opening of Bids	Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
1. PABX Installation	PhP160,000.00	March 24, 2006 (9:00 a.m.)	April 12, 2006 (8:30 a.m.)	PhP200.00
2. Supply and Delivery IT Equipment	PhP2,000,000.00	March 24, 2006 (2:00 p.m.)	April 12, 2006 (2:00 p.m.)	PhP1,000.00
3. Consultancy for WEB Development with Content Mgt. System	PhP150,000.00	March 24, 2006 (9:00 a.m.)	April 12, 2006 (10:00 a.m.)	PhP200.00

2. The Bid Documents shall be available at the Council for the Welfare of Children-Bids and Awards Committee (CWC-BC) Secretariat starting March 17, 2006 upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria as specified in the IRR-Part A of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act" and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and the citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to R.A. 5183.

4. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered in the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) at No. 10 Apo street, Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City at 10:00 a.m. of March 27, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form and amount stated in the tender document in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted. The Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) reserves the right to accept, reject any Bid or to annul the bidding process, at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

5. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat, CWC Building No. 10 Apo Street, Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City at Tel. Nos. 740-8664/711-1141 or visit (www.cwc.gov.ph)

MA. ELENA S. CARABALLO, CESO III

Deputy Executive Director and Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

CWC Bldg., No. 10 Apo St., Sta. Mesa Heights, 1114 Quezon City

P.O. Box No. 2363. Q.C. Central Post Office

Tel. Nos. 743-8375, 740-8864; Telefax Nos. 743-8374, 740-8863, 781-1039

E-mail: cwc@info.com.ph • website: www.cwc.gov.ph

(PDI-March 11, 2006)

Know the market and know it well

By Tina Arceo-Dumla

KNOWING THE MARKET AND knowing it well spelled the difference in the Tourism department's campaign to entice more moneyed tourists to see the sights in the Philippines.

In most such companies, you are certain to have a good number of unprofitable customers—those where your earnings are not even enough to contribute to recovering your variable costs. In effect you are subsidizing them.

The worst case of course is what has come to be known as "toxic customers"—those who keep on violating in the most flagrant manner, accepted industry "rules" as in the case of bank customers who habitually issue bouncing checks, or those whom you can't seem to do anything good or enough. Banks should terminate accounts of these.

"Does customer satisfaction always translate to customer loyalty?" We say: "Not always. But you can't do without customer satisfaction." To gain customer loyalty, our diagnosis is: "Pay attention to the forces that influence: (1) your customers' continuing patronage of your service over the long term, (2) their purchase/use of your service on a repeated and an exclusive or preferential basis, (3) their recommending on their own initiative your service to friends and associates, (4) their preferring your service over others because of its superior qualities, (5) their liking your service over others because it has never failed to satisfy them, (6) their committing to keep on buying your service, and (7) their getting into the habit of sticking to your service."

Research in Korea, for instance, showed that Koreans were attracted to the diversity of the islands, that one island offers something different than another.

The DOT capitalized on that impression and came up with an advertising campaign around the line "Philippines: More than you can imagine."

Korea is the biggest source of tourists in the Philippines, putting

500,000 last year, and the numbers have been growing steadily over the past five years.

In China, on the other hand, the DOT continues to use the Wealth of Wonders (WOW) tagline as it enjoys good recall in the mainland.

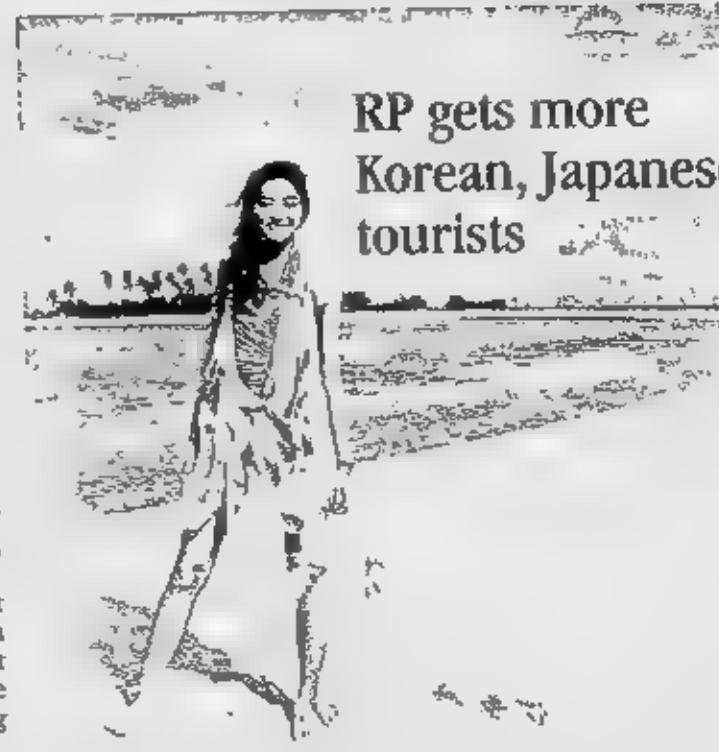
China arrivals have grown more than 2.5 times from 39,000 in 2004 to over 110,000 in 2005, and more

Chinese are expected to travel as their incomes increase following massive investments in the country.

In Japan, which has long been the biggest source of tourists until it was overtaken by Korea last year, the DOT built the campaign around the beach destinations, such as Boracay, Cebu and Bohol.

This is based on research that said the beaches were what the Japanese loved best about the

RP gets more Korean, Japanese tourists



フィリピンは
カラダにいい。

Philippines

Data also showed that the Philippines appealed to the young, adventurous Japanese, especially women who have their own money to spend for travel.

Durano said there was a time when the DOT took a very general approach to marketing campaigns.

Posters, flyers and even television and print advertisements were written in English, which

the target markets did not respond as well to, and the messages did not differentiate the Philippines from the other tourist destinations.

The DOT, thus, decided to not be everywhere and to focus on Korea, Japan and China, which are the biggest sources of tourists in the world.

The DOT contracted local advertising and public relations firms to write Philippine material in the local languages, even going as far as getting popular artists to endorse the Philippines.

In Japan, the DOT signed up fashion icon Anne Watanabe, daughter of actor Ken Watanabe, to be the campaign spokesperson and Ambassador of Goodwill for the Premium Resort Islands campaign.

This is to target Japanese women in their 20s to 50s with extensive travel experience and looking for a beach just a few hours away.

Durano said the Philippines is in a unique position to attract this market as the country is the closest tropical destination to Japan, and also China and Korea.

It was not only the marketing campaigns that were reorganized since 2004, so was the bureaucracy.

The DOT set up teams to handle Japan, China and Korea, whose job it is to implement the programs to get the tourists to the country.

Durano said that by having specific teams handling single markets, the programs would be more focused and coordination across departments would be easier.

Team Japan headed by Rosario Virginia G. Gaetos of the Philippine Conventions and Visitors Corp., for instance, is putting a new spin to the Premium Resort Islands Campaign called "The Philippines: Wellness from the Inside Out."

Filipinos, saving more for the future

By Joel V. Nigos

INFLATION, OIL PRICE HIKE, EVAT. Amidst the higher cost of living nowadays, Filipinos have become financially wiser and more conscious and cautious of their everyday expenditures. Recent studies show that two out of three Filipinos give priority to saving. Whether it is in the form of getting the biggest bargain, cutting on expenses or building on their savings, Filipinos are adjusting and adopting a new lifestyle of saving.

These are some of the things Juliet Villamor and her husband had considered when they recently purchased a pension plan as a means of saving for future needs. "Napakalaking tulungan ng pre-need sa akin (Pre-need has been a great help to us)," Juliet enthuses. Several years earlier, they bought an education plan for their child and after seeing the benefits it has brought them, decided to buy a pension plan for a secured retirement.

Treasure every moment

Just like the Villamors, securing your and your loved ones' future should be done by planning ahead. "Dapat talaga maghanda hangga't maaaga (It's a must to prepare)" advises Juliet. "Hindi kasi natin alam kung ano ang mangyayari bakes (we can never know what will happen in the future)."

The secret to financial security is simple—plan ahead. There's no better time to plan for your future, but now. The realization of your dreams for the future lies on two things—your current lifestyle and sound financial management. Wise savings means having money to be used for current needs and allocating a percentage of your income for future financial needs like your children's education, healthcare and retirement. Take a quiz to assess how much financial security you will need in the future.

Save up for retirement

Retirement is one life stage often neglected but must be given great attention. With all the medical advancement and pursuit for a healthier lifestyle, man's life expectancy has increased; yet, his financial planning for these added years has been left behind.

We create a budget for our wedding, program our income when the kids start schooling, even create a weekly budget calendar for all household expenses, but we never look at how life is going to be after the steady income from a regular job stops coming at 65 years of age. Because there is life after our work years, having a solid retirement plan ensures a fulfilled and worry-free life for you and your family in the future.

Aid to financial planning

Over the years one company has stood out in providing comprehensive and innovative pension products to the Filipino market, Philam Plans. Philam Plans is the country's most trusted pre-needed company and has been the undisputed pension provider in the past 6 years.

Its Future Fund line of pension products allows you to enjoy maximum flexibility with your choice of payment terms and maturity period that suit your financial needs. For short-term needs, you may even get cash benefits earlier than the maturity date. Your fully paid plan may also be used as collateral to secure a loan via its partner banks, providing you the liquidity you so desire. The Parangal Pension Plan, on the other hand, is an affordable pension plan that provides your basic pension requirements. With just a small amount, you can already start saving up for your future.

Aside from pension products, Philam Plans offers other savings plans that address education, healthcare and inheritance, all of which can provide a better future for the Filipino family.

Philam Plans helps secure one's healthcare needs with Philam Protect, a medical care plan made possible by the partnership of Philamlife and PhilamCare. While regular HMOs cover one's medical expenses until the age of 60, Philam Protect provides funds and medical assistance beyond those years. It is there to cover for medical spending during the time when people need medical care the most. This product also includes features that maintain one's good health condition through unlimited consultation and annual check-ups in PhilamCare clinics. Allowances are also provided for hospitalization and reimbursement for surgical procedures.

A new pre-needed product in the market, the Philam Inheritance Fund helps the planholder build up his inheritance for his family to ensure that the good life he has given them will be sustained even after he's gone. With a comprehensive list of insurance features added to living benefits, funds can also be used to settle estate and property taxes. Built into the Inheritance Fund is the professional administration of the planholder's memorial service as conducted by the company's Family Assistance Officers.

Philam Plans' Life plans see to it that the family's needs are well taken care of even after their loved one has gone. More than just providing the service and funds for the memorial rites, the planholder and his family also benefits from the insurance features of the product. Both the Serenity and Parangal Life Plan give the family of the departed the privilege to choose the mortuary nearest and most convenient to them for the conduct of memorial services.

Committed to serve

Philam Plans has made savings much easier through its call center, where anyone can get free financial planning and product information just by dialing 5285-200. Philam Plans sales counselors are all well trained to match your future financial needs with the perfect pre-needed product. Whether in good times or in tough times, Philam Plans has never wavered in its commitment to its planholders in the last 16 years. It has kept its promise by fulfilling its mission of saving dreams, memories and children's future. (Check out www.philamplans.com.ph for information on Philam Plans and its products)

It now has over 700,000 planholders comprising more than one-third of the total pre-needed market. It has also the largest and most liquid trust fund level among pre-needed companies, enough to cover the P600 million projected maturing benefits in 2006 and the rest of its planholder obligations until 2013.

A subsidiary of the country's leading insurance company and the most trusted name in life insurance, Philamlife, Philam Plans has consistently topped market surveys emerging as the No. 1 pre-needed company in the last four years. It is also a part of the US-based American International Group (AIG), the world's leading insurance and financial services organization. —With Grace Del Rosario

Imagine your hair starts to turn gray, you stop counting your age and start counting your grand children. Your company surprised you with a grand retirement party, and then you just wake up the next day with a completely different lifestyle.

Fill up this simple test and find out what to expect in life after retirement. Below are just a few things you'll need or do when you graduate from employment and settle into retirement.

Estimated cost per month

P _____.00

'Does customer satisfaction always translate into loyalty?'

Q: OUR COMPANY IS A SERVICE COMPANY. We've been preparing to go after the Baldridge Quality Award. For the past three years we've had an annual customer satisfaction survey as part of the requirements for the Award. We have also put in place last year a customer loyalty program. In our last Board meeting, a new director asked about the relationship between the two. His specific question was: "Shouldn't there be a link between those two? Does high customer satisfaction always translate to customer loyalty?" There was a good deal of exchange of opinions but no one could cite what our new director was looking for: "research-based answers." Or at least what he called "a strong theoretically founded argument." Do you have data on this?

A: It sounds like you have for your

new Board member a research-minded director. He's probably also a professor or former professor schooled in the theoretical basis of customer behavior. We believe that's generally good. We once quoted in this column the famous Kurt Lewin as saying: "Nothing is more practical than a good theory." This challenges our wrong but popular belief that: "What's good in theory is most of the time not good in practice."

Let's start with customer satisfaction. What we now know about customer satisfaction is that it's relative to customer expectation. If your product or



MARKETING RX
Dr. Ned Roberto
& Ardy Roberto



there's customer delight. If you go beyond customer delight, then you surprise the customer.

You mentioned that you're in service marketing. We don't mind repeating what we've explained in a previous column—a satisfactory service derives from three basic sources: A satisfactory service staff, a satisfactory service venue or outlet, and a satisfactory service processing. The authority on service marketing, Chris Lovelock, had re-

searched on these sources and pointed out that they are "multiplicatively" related. That means that if there's dissatisfaction in one, then there'll be customer dissatisfaction in all. This seems to be the rule among American customers. However, our experience in the Philippines says that this is not necessarily true among Filipino customers. The relationship is mostly additive. This means that dissatisfaction in one factor comes out to still overall satisfaction if there's satisfaction in the other two.

In terms of customer disposition, the "multiplicative" relationship refers to an "unforgiving" customer. An additive disposition defines a "forgiving" customer. When exactly are Filipino customers additive or forgiving?

So far, our research shows that when your service people are courteous and friendly (that is, scoring high in satisfac-

tion), customers won't mind that much if you score average or even below average in service venue and processing. A satisfactory service staff will make up more than enough for your low score in the other two factors. This is particularly true with Class C and D customers. Where they can be unforgiving is expectedly also in a disappointing service staff. So invest in training good and quality service personnel.

The Filipino equivalent of the unforgiving American customer is the upscale customer. A zero score in any one of the three forces of service satisfaction results in a zero total score. It's a "multiplicative" unforgiving attitude as a rule. There are of course exceptions but very few.

What about customer loyalty? How is satisfaction related to loyalty?

No satisfaction = no loyalty

What we are beginning to understand is that there can be no loyalty if there's no satisfaction. No customer can be loyal to something that has disappointed or is disappointing that customer. However, satisfaction is no guarantee for customer loyalty. Customer loyalty then is more complicated than customer satisfaction.

This complicated character is reflected in the available metrics for loyalty. In his survey research studies, the senior MRx-er uses two sets of loyalty measurements.

The first set is based on the most popular concept of customer loyalty as a behavior. Not surprisingly Lovelock (in his 2001 Services Marketing book) calls this "behavioral loyalty." There are three indicators of behavioral loyalty: Customers' continuing patronage of your service over the long term, their purchase and use of your service on a repeated and an exclusive or preferential basis, and their recommending on their own initiative your service to friends and associates. Your service's unweighted or weighted total score on these indicators tells you the extent of customer behavioral loyalty. If you decide to use weights, they should correspond to your priority ranking of the three indicators and sum up to 1 if you're using fractions as weight measures or 100 percent if you're into percentages for the weight measures.

The second set of loyalty measurements comes from R. Oliver's 1999 Journal of Marketing article "Whence Consumer Loyalty." The set consists of four agree-disagree statements as follows:

1. A "cognitive loyalty" statement that says: "I prefer this service over others because of its superior qualities over others."
2. An "affective loyalty" statement that says: "I like this service over others because it has never failed to satisfy me."
3. A "conative loyalty" statement that says: "I have committed to keep on buying this same service."
4. An "action loyalty" statement that says: "I've gotten into the habit of sticking to this service and just keep on buying it."

Your service's unweighted or weighted score on these four scales determine the extent of your customer loyalty. Refer to the weight measures in the first set of loyalty measurements if you decide to use weights here.

Notice how there is only one direct reference to customer satisfaction in these two sets of customer loyalty metrics. That's in the "affective loyalty" measurement. Of course, customer satisfaction is supposedly contained by all the oth-

'DOES' B2-3

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NISSAN MOTOR SALES INC.
Tel. Nos. 522-0402, 522-4002
NISSAN PHILIPPINES
Tel. Nos. 522-0403, 522-4003
NISSAN PHILIPPINES
Tel. Nos. 522-0404, 522-4004

MANILA DEALERS:
NISSAN PARADISE INC.
Tel. Nos. 521-57-5951-52, 521-7387-5000
NISSAN MOTOR SALES INC.
12th Floor, Galleria Center, 12th Street corner 12th Avenue
Tel. Nos. 522-0401, 522-4001
NISSAN PHILIPPINES INC.
Tel. Nos. 522-0402, 522-4002
NISSAN PHILIPPINES
Tel. Nos. 522-0403, 522-4003

BALAYAS DEALERS:
S & H MOTORS INC.
Tel. Nos. 523-37-5044-55
NISSAN MOTOR SALES INC.
12th Floor, Galleria Center, 12th Street corner 12th Avenue
Tel. Nos. 522-0401, 522-4001
NISSAN PHILIPPINES INC.
Tel. Nos. 522-0402, 522-4002
NISSAN PHILIPPINES
Tel. Nos. 522-0403, 522-4003

MANILA DEALERS:
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1st Ave. 2nd Flr., Bldg. 100, Brgy. 255-260
NISSAN ENTERPRISES INC.
1st Ave. 2nd Flr., Bldg. 100, Brgy. 255-260
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Channel		2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Kapamilya Cinema	WAGA (Road)	Peces de Avila	PBA Late Night	Mr. Bean	Needs	Outstanding Cold Spell	TV Patrol World	FBA	Giving My Best	Sgt. Pelegio	Phoenix Live	Prop Big Brother The On Day	Big News	America Idol	Gutierrez	Inside			
ABS-CBN 2	The Contender	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Colgate Kids Next Door	Easter House Emergency Service	The Game	Top Gear	Travel Agents West Coast	Amazon	The Grandest	Game Shows	Rebel Rangers West Coast	Yellow Cab	Elton John	Reyes	13 Guests				
ATVN	Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Dora's University	Locating The Lost Fandango?																
Cinema One	1 Badges	The Hanging Girls	A Short Case Of Murder	World News Poller	World Sport	Lucky King Live	Forrest Fenn	Business International Law & Order	Entertainment	Reputation	World News Asia	World News Asia								
Chionex																				
CNN																				
Cover/Suspense																				
Discovery Channel																				
Discovery Channel	Mr. Bean: The Arrogant Scales From Top 100 Classic Days	Extreme Engineering Daily Spots	Art Attack Up! Interactive Daily	My Little House and Friends	Life & Style	Death, Divorce, Murder Mystery	Twinkie Splits	Most Thin Models Possibilities	Mr. Bean: The Arrogant Scales	Reputation	World News Asia	World News Asia								
ETB																				
ETC	Pop! Personality	Charge It!	Change And Go!	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style															
ETW-TV	The Wind War Made Easy	Angela	The Great Man	Angela	Angela															
Fox News	Hannity & Colmes	On The Record With Greta Van Susteren																		
GMA 7	Kung Marahon Ng Lang At Bawat	I Now And Forever	Felicidad Ola	McDonald's The Curious Case	Digibell Z	Great Teacher Orde	Lauren	24 Hours Broadcast	Entertainment	Entertainment										
Harmon Channel																				
HBO																				
Hot TV	Yabai Japan	Mr. Asia	O.C.L.E.	Recurrent Order	Recurrent Order															
IBC 13																				
JackTV	Positive Click	The Little Sister	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style																
Lifestyle Network	Cool City Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style		
MTV Philippines	MTV Hits	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style																	
MX	Rough Riders	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style																	
National Geographic	Alone Across The Ground	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style																	
NTW																				
Macabre	Clashzone	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style																	
PRO	People Na Pa Ngay	Decorating With Style	Decorating With Style																	
TV	How Long Are You?	Decor																		

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Text us your feedback: Inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 288 (Smart) E-mail: lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Introducing
a new
*Community
Innovations*

• WEDNESDAY 2B • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

Forever-pink nipples?

YES, BEAUTY IS GOING FROM WHITE TO pink. Make that white—and pink.

You don't have to be in the beauty or fashion industry to know that whitening isn't just a trend. Whitening products—from sunblocks to foundation to night cream—constitute a lucrative segment of the skincare and cosmetics industry worldwide, starting with Asia. It's still growing.

It's a boom area that caught beauty and skincare industries by surprise, particularly because the beauty executives in the West underestimated the Asian women's obsession with "whiteness." (For the record, it's an obsession we don't necessarily buy because there's nothing like the sultry morena—an attribute that landed the likes of our Anna Bayle an enviable niche in the world.)

The other day, dropping by a top hair salon chain, I just realized that another trend is emerging: women are going pink. Now, women want their whitened complexion to have that blush, that pinkish glow. What's new is that they're applying the pinkish color cream not just to their cheeks but also to their lips and nipples. Forever-pink nipples should be a perfect marketing pitch.

The principle is not new—it's revitalizing skin cells, enhancing their metabolism, to create that fresh, youthful glow. Women have been using this skincare technological breakthrough to "whiten" their underarm, knees, heels, elbows. Now add the lips and nipples.

Men's reaction to this can be amusing, or cluelessness. Some male executives I once overheard talking have this notion that such whitening products actually turn your skin paper-white, or can turn a morena to mestiza. Any whitening product that claims that is, in fact, bad for your skin because it destroys it. A whitening product clarifies your skin, evens it so that sun spots and other blemishes "disappear," and allows the skin's natural glow to come out.

The inclusion of such whitening products among the lines of beauty and skincare global giants like Ponds, for instance, brought whitening into the consciousness of the mainstream market.

Now women will not stop there. They want that pinkish glow as well. This much I concluded when I saw women snapping up the Miracle Pink Skin Color Restoring Cream at Ricky Reyes' Salon last week. The Miracle Pink, says its package, can "inhibit and terminate the melanin formation, speed up the regeneration of skin cells." Its ingredients include deionized

**Thelma
Sioson San Juan**

water, grape-seed extract, ascorbic acid. I presume it contains plant and herbs, extracts. You can scrutinize its label yourself if you want to feel safe. I haven't tried it but I heard it lasts for some time.

Anyway, on top of this, I believe summer is going pink, from skincare cream to cosmetics. I discovered Shu Uemura Water Blusher and since then, can't do without it. It's stick you dab on your cheeks, it feels cool, almost refreshing on your cheeks, and leaves your cheeks with a pinkish glow. It creates a natural pinch on your cheeks. That and a translucent pink lip gloss should give you that barely there makeup for summer.

From forever-pink nipples to a natural, pinch on the cheeks, women indeed have the edge—and the armory.

Two Vs

If you ask which look and designer won in the Oscars, I'd say it's the two V's—vintage and Versace. That is, if you don't count Nicole Kidman's Balenciaga. Nicole seems unbeatable on the red carpet. She not only picks the right de-

signer, she also knows how to pull it off—something, to my mind, Charlize Theron wasn't able to do in her Galiano. Nicole is an Oscars classic.

However, obviously it was fresh-from-rehab Donatella Versace who burned the midnight oil just to snag as many stars to wear her gowns. It is said that she herself did the last-minute fittings. Her harvest was awesome: Uma Thurman, Hilary Swank, Salma Hayek, Jessica Alba, and, in the Vanity Fair party, Madonna, Lindsay Lohan, among others.

Of course, vintage was on winner Reese Witherspoon (in a 1955 Dior) and on J.Lo.

Ford and nudes

Speaking of Vanity Fair, the March cover of Tom Ford with a nude Keira Knightley and an equally nude Scarlett Johansson is enjoying the buzz. The idea of Ford working as guest editor to present Vanity Fair's Hollywood issue is a sheer creative and marketing genius. It's also a casting coup. What's interesting, however, is the insider report of WWD that Vanity Fair tested two covers—one showing Ford and Keira and Scarlett, the other showing Keira and Scarlett alone. They did the cover testing with focus groups, and the result? More voted for having Ford on the cover, thus the March cover.

That's how durable a brand Ford is.

Crispy and worthy

Only one occasion, where I am concerned, was worth chomping away at crispy pata for,



In this era of whitening, women want a different blush, from face to toe

BRIGHT-PINK
Lipstick is a definite head-turner this summer.

PHOTOGRAPH:
DARREN TIESTE
MAKEUP:
CHICHELORON
MODEL: CAROLINE
FOR METRO
MAGAZINE MARCH
ISSUE

thus committing cholesterol sin. the party given by his staff for Unilever's Francis Flores. It was a most enjoyable private evening at Luce recently when Ponds' Orange Aberin, Dondi Gomez, Noel and Gina Lorenzana sprang an almost-surprise party for Francis. Friends like Albert Almendrala, Tim Yap and Robbie Carmona were also there. Francis is not leaving Unilever but just moving up from Ponds, where he had a most enjoyable and successful stint, to be the regional marketing manager for Axe in Asia, another Unilever brand. That's an exhilarating move up (literally it's only a one-floor move down in the Unilever office in Manila). In his new challenging post, Francis is making the rounds of Asia. To think he's not even 30.

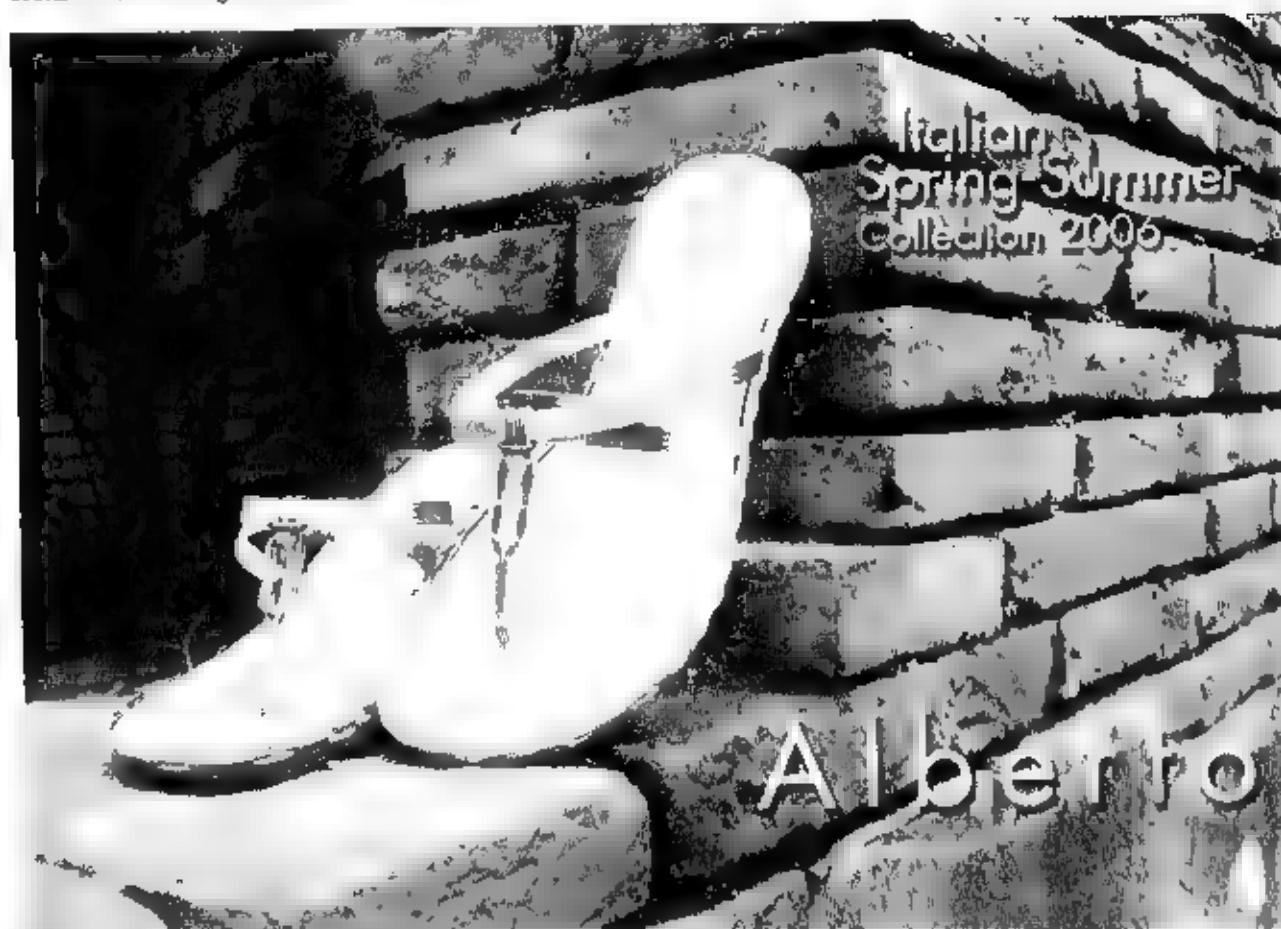
E-mail the author at Thelma.SSanJuan@abs.pmooycentral.com

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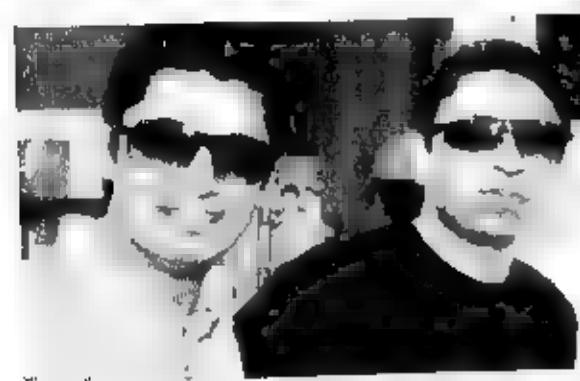
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May araw na.

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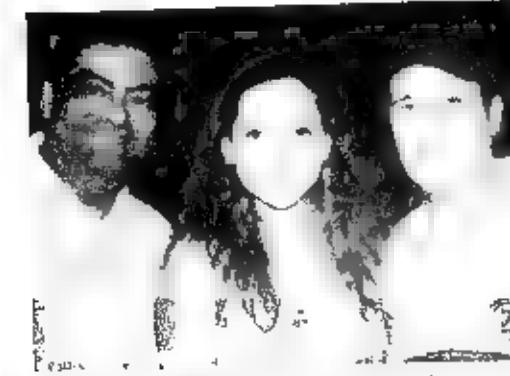
AWARD-WINNING actor Albert Martinez, Timex's Murli Menon and Van Heusen's Ashutosh Goyal



HERBERT Sy, SM Supermarkets head; Henry Sy, taipan; and Baby Cheng, EVP for SM Appliance, enjoy the high-goal match of the Enrique Zobel Memorial Cup.



MOI with Manila's crème de la crème Janine de Padua, Marilou Muscat, Kat Abad and Johnny Velasquez



BLI's vice president Lal Gopwani with Maricris and Inigo Zobel



KUMIKO Kuroda, wife of Asian Development Bank president Haruhiko Kuroda; Dee Zobel; and Renée Speltz, wife of US Ambassador to ADB Paul Speltz



RAY-BAN'S Joy Gutierrez, MVP David "Pelon" Stirling, and Ray-Ban's secret weapon Gabbie Avanceña



BLI's chair Bob Mirani and RAY-BAN'S Devi Leano



WE ARE THE CHAMPS. The winning team with BLI's chair Bob Mirani

A thousand thrills at the Polo Club

AFUSION OF FASHION, WORLD-CLASS polo excellence and prestige, dahlings, marked the fab Enrique Zobel Memorial 2006 Polo Cup, superbly presented by Van Heusen, America's No. 1 dress-shirt brand, and Ray-Ban, the world's best-known chic eyewear brand.

Sports enthusiasts and Manille's high-profile movers, shakers and achievers watched the super-exciting competitive polo match at the chub and tres exclusive Manila Polo Club, but where else?

The cup was launched by the Zobel family in 2005 to pay tribute to the well-loved late tycoon, Don Enrique Zobel, and to celebrate his lifetime's love affair with horses and polo.

The world-class polo hotshots were led by high goalies Inigo Zobel and three internationa, high-ranking players: el simpatico David "Pelon" Stirling of Uruguay, who was absolutely incredible on the field, even hitting the ball while still in the air; el guapo José Donoso of Chile; and witty, wealthy British Mark Field, who wore Van Heusen polo uniforms of white and blue while bartling it out for the goal on the polo field.

Leading the ceremonial salute and throw-in, which signaled the beginning of the awesome high-goal match, were the adorable widow of the late Enrique Zobel, Dee Zobel, his granddaughter, gorgeous Bianca Z., and the chair of Madison Retailers Inc., Bob Mirani. They were assisted by Manila Polo Club president Ray Dempsey. The low goal match was played in round-

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare system

robin among three competing teams. The Whites were the winners with the most number of five goals. The Blues and the Whites tied in number; both earned three.

The high point of that breezy sunny afternoon was the exciting high-goal match, palanggas. The game between the Whites (Inigo Zobel, Mark Field, David Stirling and Mark Austin) and the Blues (Bobby Aguirre, Dino Santos, José Donoso and Anthony Garcia) was fast and super-exhilarating.

Apres six breathless chukkers, the Whites went home with the shining Silver Cup in the final score of 17 to 8. The Most Valuable Player was David Stirling.

Then a fabulous show of slick Porsche sports cars rumbled into the field.

Wow! It was such an awesome sight that, even before the cars parked in a line, the chic-y Polo set applauded like forever.

Cocktails followed.

Hey, it definitely was the best polo game I've attended in eons, palanggas.

New home shop

We all have our very own "likes and dislikes" in choosing what's best for our dream home or apartment. Over the years, palanggas, there have been all sorts of design "themes" from modern minimalist to antique Filipino, modern retro, and classic European, and the demand for objects d'art is still high natch.

As Filipinos, our taste has become more sophisticated, in spite of all the gloom and doom around. Hey! We still want to live well and feel good, at least we try, di bala?

This is where the one-of-a-kind "Beyond Bamboo" holds fort, palanggas. Brilliantly conceptualized by gorgeous sisters Sheila B. Romero and Trisha Bermudez, Beyond Bamboo will blow your socks off for its fab interior décor items not normally found in

bigger retail stores.

Sheila Bermudez-Romero is also a restaurateur. After six fruitful years in the restaurant business, she gave up the reins on her Azzuro Bistro ownership and decided to take a newfound challenge by forming Branching Out Company Ltd. with Trisha.

Sheila's passion has now expanded into the "art of living."

We didn't only have super time, we also had a fantastic choice of things to perk up parts of the home, dahlings.

Cosmo Manille's hotshots made sure they were there to grab the best of whatever they fancied, while Sheila R. and Trisha B. made sure to help them make up their minds.

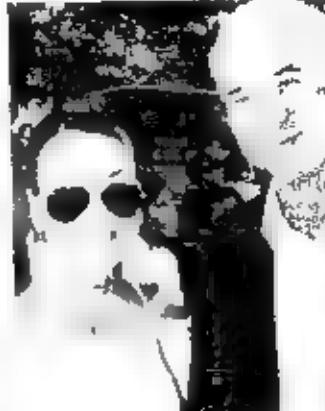
Check it out. Beyond Bamboo is at 2/L, 122 Jupiter St., Makati, with tels: 8907680 and 8908191 (telefax) or e-mail bermudeztrisha@yahoo.com. You'll have fun while spending. Now, that's real cool.

Awesome

This year's fantastic "NamiMoto Year 4!" was an awesome weekend, of which much has been written in the pages of this paper.

It was superbly sponsored by the world-class Nami Resort, the popular Motorola, hard-to-beat Smart Infinity, and Sear.

Our group, a potpourri of Manille's business, media and social elite, had an awesome weekend, totally chockfull of fabulous fun and divine brunches, lunches and dinners.



SABRINA Artadi and HSBC CEO Warner Manning



SHELL Canvas top gal Bonnie Chua and Folded and Hung's main man, Ronald Pineda



DIG that close-up look. Attractive Maielle Mamintim and good-looking Felino Neri



BIANCA and Natalia Zobel



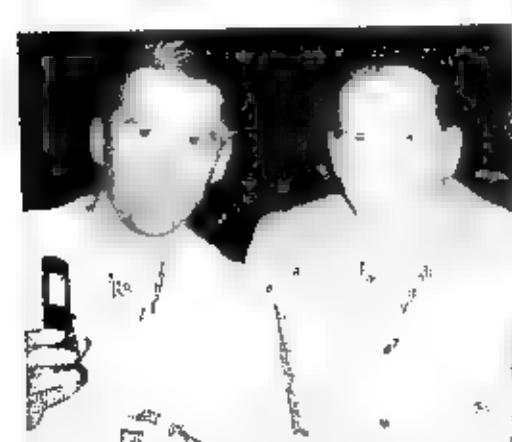
THEY love Beyond Bamboo. Tally Asuncion, gorgeous Mai Castro, good-looking David Kauffman and lady of taste Danette Vizmonte



SUN LIFE's Lorenzo Tan with Tammy Tanchangco



HOTSHOTS with taste and style. Super PSIDs Leo Almeria, gorgeous Trisha Bermudez, store partner Irene Marcos Araneta, another store partner, beautiful Sheila Romero, Maryrose Toda Delgado, and swell, hot couturier Randy Ortiz



MOTOROLA country manager Patrick Aronson, with AJ Joes showing off the Motorola phone he won

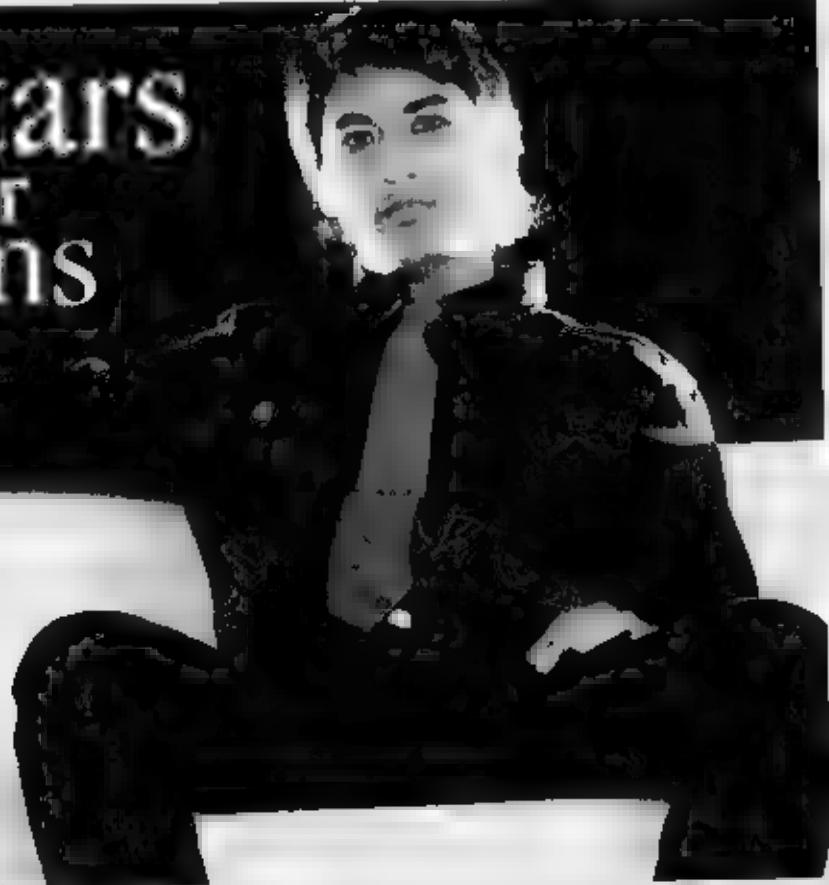


CAPRICORN birthday celebrants honored at the Shipwreck glam party. Each of us got a Motorola phone as gift!

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2006



Rock stars in their fave jeans

ELY Buendia
of Pupil

LEVI'S IS UNDOUBTEDLY A staple in every rock star's closet. Just ask Ely Buendia of Pupil, Champ Lui Pio of Hale, Ebe Dancel of Sugarfree, Aia de Leon of Imago, and Maye Dimaculangan and Rye Sarmiento of 6 Cycle Mind.

The trend-setting clothing brand has a long tradition of supporting the local music scene, and now it's backing up hot musicians for the revolutionary show "MTV Homecoming."

Levi's clads the coolest rockers as they drop by their former schools and neighborhood hangouts to delight fans and friends with scintillating performances.

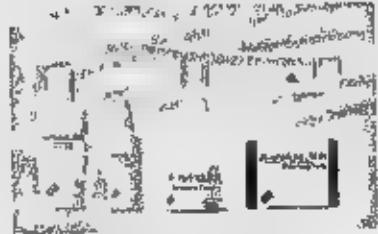
Watch how Maye and Rye go back to their alma mater, Don Bosco Tarcis, and how Aia has a blast visiting St. Scholastica. She also traces her roots at UP Los Baños, Champ causes a commotion at Marymount, and Ely surprises everyone at University of Perpetual Help.

CHAMP
Lui Pio
of Hale

IMAGO. Tim Cacho, Myrene Academia, Zach Lucero and Aia de Leon

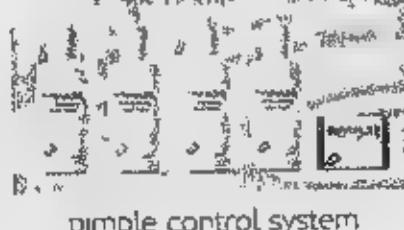
SKIN PERFECTION, SYSTEMIZED SOLUTIONS

great white ways!



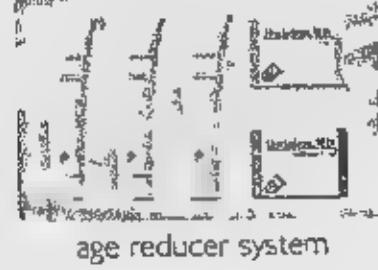
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youthfulness you
can preserve!



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flawlessness you
can achieve!



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Whitening you can wear!
Hortaleza, M.D. Whitening System

Whitening is not all-in-one. It is a continuous and integrated process that needs ample time to make you fully reap its benefits. That's why serious whitening requires nothing less than a comprehensive skin care system.

Our prescription! Hortaleza, M.D. Whitening System Gives your skin radiance by day and lightening by night. Used regularly, this system works hard to effectively lighten blemishes and dark spots, while providing protection from the skin-darkening effects of the sun and the environment. So when it comes to skin whitening, go with Hortaleza, M.D. Whitening System!

Get a Whitening starter kit for only P299!

Whitening you can swallow!
Hortaleza, M.D. Illuminous Whitening Capsule

Achieving porcelain-white, celebrity complexion and making it last is a process that goes beyond the usual skin-deep solutions. Thanks to the discovery of Glutathione, getting more permanent results has finally become so effortless.

Glutathione is essentially a natural, immunity-boosting tripeptide amino acid that is found in the body. Regular intake of Glutathione has been tested and proven for its positive "effect" on whitening of dark skin! No wonder it has been dubbed as the "prescription-of-the-moment" by Hollywood dermatologists, thus earning its status as one of the most coveted "to-die-for" beauty arsenals among celebrities, socialites—and practically anyone who can afford it!

However, with the cutting-edge expertise of Hortaleza, M.D., the once-prohibitive priced Glutathione is now made accessible with new Hortaleza, M.D. Illuminous Whitening Capsule! Enjoy the multi-benefits of Glutathione whitening, anti-aging, plus Vitamins C and E with Alpha Lipid Acid. All in one capsule for only P39.75 each! That's 50% more affordable than other brands! Get it in pairs of 30's and 10's at all HBC Home of Beauty Exclusives Stores, nationwide. Now isn't that illuminating news for your skin?



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Do you know that 40 is the new 30? Now, more than ever, skin has never been so sexy beyond 40! Youthful skin is here to stay. In an age where every second counts, count on Hortaleza, M.D. Age Reducer System to give aging skin a second chance. It rejuvenates skin while erasing tell-tale lines completely!

Get an Age Reducer starter kit for only P179!

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Acne or zits? Turn to the Hortaleza, M.D. Pimple Control System! Amazingly cleanses, purges, heals and purifies skin to the last pore! Bid acne-inducing oils goodbye! Let smooth, flawless skin rule!

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Exhibit mounted to mark anniversary

THE ENCHANTED KINGDOM MARKED ITS 10TH anniversary by mounting the exhibit "The Enchanted Kingdom: A Decade of Magic" at the Ever Commonwealth and Ever Ortigas.

The Ever Gotesco malls also presented the "Enchanting Fashion on the Catwalk" featuring Ever Kiddie Stars 2005 winners wearing tops and shirts from The Enchanted Kingdom merchandise shop. Eldar, the Wizard, and other Enchanted Kingdom performers did special numbers and had their pictures taken with children in a special meet-and-greet photo session with the aid of Photoline. Ever has branches in Ortigas, Commonwealth, Grand Central, Caoocan and Manila Plaza, Bacolod.

GOINGS ON

**SPECIAL DIS-
COUNT** Use your
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the city's finest spas and enjoy great values until April 30 through Citibank World Privileges (CWP). At Island Foot and Body Wellness on Jupiter Street, Makati, every one-hour body massage gets you a free foot massage, a P300 saving. The Palm Garden Health Spa on Emerald Avenue, Pasig offers 20-percent off on facials, body wraps and aromatherapy massages. The Suriya Spa in Glorietta 3, InterContinental Hotel or Holiday Inn Galleria Manila offers a 10 percent discount on all services. Offers are available to all Citibank cardholders as part of CWP.

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The program features exclusive offers, exceptional services and superior benefits in over 1,000 merchants locally and over 17,000 merchants across the world. Visit www.citibank.com.ph. To apply for a Citibank card, call 4233000.

DISCOUNT PROMO: There's a Double Midnight Madness at Glorietta this weekend. At Converse Glorietta 2, Dwyane Wade limited 2-pack kit is offered at 10 percent off, plus shoppers could charge it to their credit cards at deferred payment scheme without interest. The kit, available in limited supply (only 360 kits available in the Philippines), comes in a beautifully designed box that includes a pair of Wade All Star basketball shoes and a pair of Wade Profeather casual shoes plus a poster/booklet of Dwyane.

SEMINARS CFS Continental Technology is offering the following seminars. "Developing Excellent Business Communication Skills" (March 24, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.), "Basic Bookkeeping" (April 1, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.), "Purchasing Management" (March 25, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.); "Productivity Enhancement Through 5S" (March 31, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.). Call 823-2358, 823-4825 and 869-7960.

GIFT IDEAS. Electronics Boutique offers special graduation gifts for as low as P995, until April 15. Electronics Boutique has branches at Park Square, Ayala Center, Robinsons Galleria, Market! Market and Alabang Town Center Call 8990102

SUMMER WORKSHOPS. Tower Book House offers writing workshops this April for Filipino kids, 8-18 years old. The workshop includes techniques in discovering one's writing style, strengthening one's style and applying this style in various forms of communication. The workshop also tackles essay writing, feature writing, journalism, short story writing, and playwriting. Interested participants may call 8154938, 8156925; or you may visit Windsor Tower, 163 Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

LAUNCHING. Vemma, an affiliate of New Vision International, a US-based company, will be launched April 8 at the Legend Villas Hotel in Mandaluyong City. The JS\$1-billion company with over one million customers worldwide is now in the Philippines with its free membership

AIGS Marketing Corp., headed by Joey Arenal as president and CEO, is the Philippines' exclusive distributor of Vemma and New Vision nutritional wellness products. Vemma offers products such as mangoslean, aloe vera and green tea, among others. Visit www.myvemma.com/aigsmc. Free VCDs on Vemma products are available at the AIGS Marketing Corp. head office: Suite 1408 Jollibee Plaza Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City (tel. 6873018, 6873018, 0918-7931863, e-mail joey@aigspoh.com or promo@aigspoh.com)



Contributing editor
Ria Francisco-Prieto

LIFE & STYLE

Tell us your feedback
We encourage lively, honest debate
at 107 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Knockout!



Bay night

Story on page B1.

Shed some
light on
your skin



PHOTO BY VICTOR CALZADA

SHOPWISE

TREASURE HUNT

THE SHOPWISE GREAT TREASURE ADVENTURE IS ON!

SHOPWISE IMMEDIATELY CHARGES THROUGH THE NEW YEAR WITH A PAULINOS OPENING SALVO THAT WITHIN ITS WITNESS TO (AND GET READY TO HAND OVER TREASURE CHEST, FIND THE BRIGHT SPOT, AND GAIN ACCESS TO CASH PRIZE OF OVER 3 MILLION PESOS WORTH IN CASH TO BE GIVEN AWAY! THIS IS ONE SHOPPING EXPEDITION YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO MISS!

SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? SEE WHICH COORDINATES FOR ANY Shopwise BRANCH AND CELEBRATE TREASURE HUNT AND THE LEGENDARY SHOPWISE IN A TRUE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME!

SHOPWISE
The good life you can afford



Ray of light

By Ria Francisco

I WOULD RATHER BR TAN THAN fair. I used to frequent the beach a lot and I would bask in the sun with my SPF 15 in hand. After slathering myself with protection, I would wait around 15 minutes, then spread on some oil.

Voilà! I would have a really great tan.

But Shanghai changed things for me. I was sent there with a couple of other beauty editors and was given a skin test. We were tested for skin moisture, elasticity and fine lines. When it came to moisture, my skin age was four years minus my real age; I was so happy and proud. Most of the girls didn't "score" that well. My moisturizing ritual had paid off!

Next was elasticity. Three years younger... Yay!

Then fine lines. Three years' advance! Yikes!

I then pictured how I would look like in a couple of years, and I got scared. The girl doing the test was also surprised with the result since most of the time your skin age results are close to one another.

What happened? Too much time under the sun.

Those are years I cannot have back, but the good thing is that wrinkling can be prevented. I will not only use SPF everyday, but I will avoid the sun as much as I can. Truth is, when I see girls who are tanned, I

only see burnt skin and girls who will look five years older due to excessive sun.

If I want a tan, I buy a bottle of Clarins self-tanner, and I know I'd get the fab color without having to compromise aging my skin.

I am a believer in loving the skin color one has been endowed with. I am not really a big fan of whitening products. So when I go to launches that has to do with skin whitening, I must confess I don't pay much attention.

Luckily, one boring afternoon, I read the Lancôme press kit of Blanc Expert NeuroWhite and learned that whitening actually means illuminating.

And, hey, doesn't every girl want to have glowing skin?

Living in today's fast-moving modern society, women demand quick results and speedy experiences. Who hasn't complained for standing in line to a slow cinema booth or snapped at a sluggish waiter? We want it now and we want it fast!

The cosmetic gods are definitely listening to us as French cosmetics giant Lancôme launches a quick and efficient skincare product, Blanc Expert NeuroWhite. The product promises transparent luminous skin in only three days!

After three days of using the Spot Eraser, the skin immediately brightens and glows. After only four weeks, brown spots, including stubborn ones, are removed, mak-



Wake up and smell the flowers

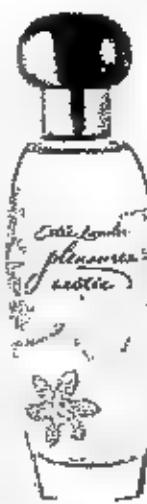
Lighten up and go for tropical fragrances

By Apples Aberin-Sadhwan

OFF WITH THE BOLERO AND cardigan, kiss goodbye to woolen slacks and heavy jeans. Give a big welcome to cool, crisp whites and breezy linens. The sun is searing hot nowadays so fashionistas are starting to peel off layers of clothing.

As a result, fragrance-choices are also getting lighter and fresher. If clothing styles change every season to adapt to the weather, it makes sense for fragrances to evolve as well.

So, say adieu to heady, spicy scents that give the feeling of warmth and are, therefore, more suited for cooler climates. It's time to open your arms (and your purse strings) to lighter, fruity and floral fragrances that evoke images of halcyon days in an exotic tropical is-



PLEASURES
Exotic by
Estée Lauder

E-mail the author at ofashion@inquirer.com.ph



The nose knows

HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL FACTS THAT YOU SHOULD know when choosing fragrance.

- Try on just one product at a time so you can avoid olfactory overload.
- Dab or spray it on your pulse points (the inner wrist is best) and let it rest for a while, as the scent will still change according to your body chemistry.
- Perfumes are composed of three notes, namely, top, middle and bottom notes. The top notes evaporate the fastest (about 5-10 minutes) and is the first scent you whiff as you apply the perfume. Middle notes emerge about 15 minutes after application and can last up to an hour or more, while bottom notes are the heavier ingredients and last for several hours. Basically, all three notes, though distinct, blend together to create a unique scent.
- The difference between perfume, Eau de Parfum, Eau de Toilette and Eau de Cologne lies in the concentration of oils in the fragrance. The highest concentration is in perfume, followed by Eau de Parfum, Eau de Toilette and Cologne. Perfumes are stronger and last longer while Eau de Parfums and Eau de Toilets or colognes are lighter. You might want to reserve the use of perfume for evening affairs while using the lighter versions for work or casual events.
- Spritz or dab perfume on your pulse points like the inner wrist, behind your ears, on your neck and even behind your knees. To make it last longer, try layering your fragrance. Fragrance companies offer products, like bath gels or lotions, which you can use to accentuate your scent. A light spray on the hair can also last all day. For a subtler scent, spray the perfume directly above and in front of you and simply walk into the mist as it showers down.
- Be careful not to get perfume stains on clothing and beware of perfume overload, as this is a definite no-no that is akin to a fashion victim piling on all the trends. Your perfume should complement, not overpower, your style and personality.

General cleansing inside and out

ACHIEVING A FLAT STOMACH AND LOSING more weight motivated me to get into a fasting program. Of course, it is the Lenten season, and I figured I might as well do something connected with fasting.

What I didn't want was zero intake that might make me faint from starvation, ulcer and vitamin deficiencies. If I was going to diet, I was going the healthy route.

My research showed that Nature's Secret Ultimate Fasting Cleanse (P4,350 for a month's supply) was the best way to go about it. It's a five-day, five-part maximum fasting and detoxifying program that cleansed the colon, liver and blood. It provides nutrition and ensures healthy elimination of toxins from the body.

Toxin buildup and enlarged colon are major causes of cancer. As some relatives

had died of cancer, the program was attractive to me.

It turns out there are major benefits to fasting a few times a year. It cleanses the kidneys, liver and colon, which is needed especially for those who are into the high-protein and low-carbohydrate diets like Atkins or South Beach. It flushes out toxins. It also provides clearer vision and cleaner breath.

Fasting also results in renewed energy—I had a feeling of lightness, was more alert and could move faster. It also leads to loss of excess weight and water. (I lost four pounds after five days of fasting.)

Fasting eases the bowels and enhances the immune system, thus promoting faster healing. It likewise purifies the blood.

The bonus: my skin felt as silky as a Hermès scarf and so much clearer. The red

veins on my eyes also subsided and I also felt cooler so the summer heat did not torture me as your body temperature drops due to fasting. I even slept without air-con!

In place of your regular three meals a day, you are given detailed instructions on what combination and dosage to take.

It surprised me that as thus was all I was taking, I would use the bathroom almost immediately after each "mealtime." By the end of it all, I felt so clean and my washboard abs were to-die-for. I wish my thighs and butt joined the bandwagon as eagerly.

The purposes of the five-day program are colon-cleansing (it supports bowel function), fiber fortification (you feel fuller), digestive health and excretion of toxins, liver maintenance and repair, appetite control, and better nutrition.

Nature's Secret Ultimate Fasting Cleanse is available at all Health Express outlets. Call 8929364.

It is suggested that we do the five-day, five-part program every three months or

every change of season in the US or Europe.

Strengthening immunity

Another supplement for strengthening the immune system that I tried recently was Immunocal, which tastes like nonfat powdered milk.

My motivation for taking this for 30 days straight was to achieve a whiter and more even-toned skin faster than Glutathione tablets. These come in powdered packets of bonded cysteine.

Cysteine is one of the main components of Glutathione and ingesting it in this form raises its levels in the body so it is actually more effective than taking just tablets.

In tablet form, it has difficulty penetrating the digestive system so we only get to absorb a small part compared to the delivery system of Immunocal.

Glutathione is essential to us because it is an antioxidant that eats up free radicals that cause our cells to break down, making

us age faster and preventing us from getting our skin's full beauty potential.

It also boosts the immune system and helps fend off sickness. It lets the body and skin repair efficiently.

Glutathione also kills the toxins that have accumulated over the years, like chemicals, mercury, lead and pesticides.

Within 30 days of taking Immunocal, my skin's texture has become silky and more even, especially on the stubborn darker areas like the back, arms and legs. The effect is faster than the tablets, which take three months to show obvious results.

Note: I stopped the tablets for two months before taking Immunocal to really monitor the progress. One may take tablets and solution at the same time to speed up the process.

Call 8442939 or visit any Belo clinic.

Forever Flawless outlet.

E-mail the author at kunnysatas@yahoo.com

How to fake a tan

Too much sun-tanning may damage your skin

SUMMER IS HERE AND IT is time to have that sun-kissed look. Most of us head for the beach and lie under the sun. Others go for the tanning salons and voilà they have an instant tan!

I have nothing against tanned skin, but I am not comfortable with the process. Do you know that the No. 1 cause of skin aging, skin damage and skin cancer is the sun?

Actually, anything that emits light

causes skin damage. Our computers, televisions or even the lights in our house have ultraviolet rays that may damage the skin.

So what can and should we do about it? Simple. Wear sunblock every day.

Even when you are not going to the beach, wear SPF 30; it is the best protection. There are plenty of facial sunblocks available now in the market. They are very sheer and lightweight to the face. They are also intended for everyday use.

I personally use Shu Uemura XTR 50 and Lancôme's UV Protect in 50. I myself avoid the sun like the plague because I get burned easily. I am sure I am not the only who shares this sentiment.

But I envy people who have nice, glowing brown skin. So what should I do to have that same effect without frying myself?

Makeup! All you need is a good bronzer and you're going to be like those sun goddesses!

Base. Use a foundation that is two shades darker than your regular one. Or try a bronzer stick. Make sure your face is clean, dry and matte. The bronzer will stick to oily or damp areas and streak making your face look dirty.

You can also apply blush before the bronzer. This would give the illusion of a rosy, sexy, slightly sun-kissed look.

For a dewy look, dab a sheer gel bronzer over your blush.

If you want that sun-kissed look, apply the bronzer with a big fluffy brush. Concentrate on the areas where the sun naturally hit your face.

Lips. Stick to the nudes or just dab a little gloss on the center of your lips.

TEXT AND MAKEUP BY BABE CHIN



Before



After

More Choices, Better Deals, Great Prizes in BPI Real 0%, No Sweat Installment Madness

BPI Express Credit ushers in the sizzling summer months with the most awaited shopping event of the year, the BPI Installment Madness, from March 15 to April 2, 2006 at the Glorietta Ayala Center.

Now on its 37th staging, the BPI Installment Madness is famous for providing BPI Express credit cardholders the best value for their credit card with the greatest merchandising mix.

It features top brand home appliances, the most elegant furniture and home furnishings, indoor sports equipment, the hottest cellphones, and digital and electronic products. And the best thing about it is that credit cardholders can choose from an option of charging and converting their transactions on installment through the Special Installment Plan (S.I.P.) facility of their BPI Express

Credit Cards with really low interest rates! It gives them up to 24 months to pay for their purchases at affordable installment rates.

The BPI Installment Madness is the perfect opportunity for BPI Express Credit cardholders to update their basic as well as luxury household needs, upgrade their cellphones and gadgets, and purchase their long-wished-for cameras and computers.

Add to that a fabulous mix of instant freebies everyday and the BPI Installment Madness is surely one shopping event one shouldn't miss.

That's not all. BPI Express Credit cardholders who use

their BPI Express Credit Classic, Express Credit Blue MasterCard, Express Credit Gold MasterCard, Petron-BPI MasterCard and BPI Edge/Mini Edge in purchasing items at real 0% interest are assured of absolutely no hidden charges installment deals!

Because unlike other credit card purchases wherein you pay just the minimum amount due or 5% of the outstanding balance every month, chances are your 0% installment purchases actually get interest. That's why the BPI 0% interest is for real!

Plus! Cardholders who make purchases in the BPI Installment Madness promo are

also entitled to join BPI Express Credit Card's existing promos: the 2mad about' email and the Make It Happen promo.

The 2mad about' email promo gives BPI Express Credit cardholders the chance to win a Nissan Patrol 4x4. All they have to do is make a minimum P1,000 single receipt regular purchase or a P3,000 single receipt S.I.P. purchase at Glorietta.

BPI Express Credit's Make It Happen promo, meanwhile, gives cardholders the chance to win a trip to a trip to the United States' popular theme parks, a Mediterranean Cruise, a 2006 Porsche Boxster and a 2006 Audi A4 Avant. All they have to do is make a minimum P1,000 single receipt regular purchase or a P3,000 single receipt S.I.P. purchase at any BPI

accredited merchant nationwide.

Not a BPI Express Credit Cardholder yet? Sign up now and get the chance to be part

of the shopping frenzy of the BPI Installment Madness. That and numerous exclusive features and privileges like superior security against fraud with the Europay MasterCard/VISA-compliant chip, lower finance charges, low foreign currency conversion rates for purchases made abroad, no hidden charges, and payment convenience anytime anywhere via the Express Phone, Express Online, and in over 1,200 ATMs and 700 BPI or BPI Family Bank branches nationwide.

So make sure you make the most of your money. Take advantage of the BPI Real 0%, No Sweat Installment Madness.

ADVT

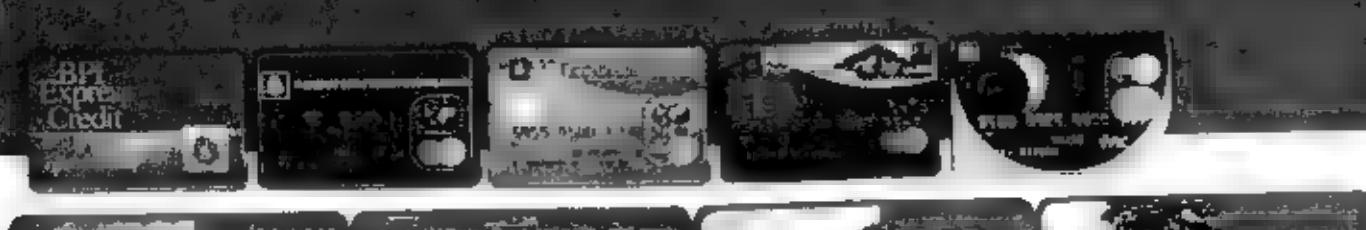
BPI EXPRESS CREDIT



**You may win the trip that puts
the world at your feet and
your family by your side.**

Only from the credit cards that can

**Make IT
Happen**



To join, simply charge a minimum purchase of P1,000 to your BPI Express Credit Card. Every P1,000 purchase entitles you to one raffle entry. The more entries, the more chances to win.

*To apply for a BPI Express Credit Card, visit any BPI or BPI Family Savings Bank branch or Express Banking Center near you or call 88-100 or log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com.

*Annual membership fee for new customers waived for the first year.
**Approved applicants during the promo period will also earn raffle entries.
*Actual card may vary from photo.

BPI Express Credit's Make It Happen promotion is from November 15, 2005 to May 15, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 8502, Series of 2005.

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LIFE'S A WRAP

PHOTOGRAPHY DIX • HAIR AND MAKEUP YZA PALERMO AND JGS MAYUGA FOR SHU UEMURA • INFINITY WRAP PENSOPHOPPE • LOCATION SPECIAL THANKS TO LEX LEDESMA

Savvy style

Sash

Utility top

Party wrap

Shrug

Wrap

halo-halo special

To infinity and beyond!

For P349, you can come up with at least 12 ways to wear the Infinity Wrap from Penshoppe. That's P29 per look!



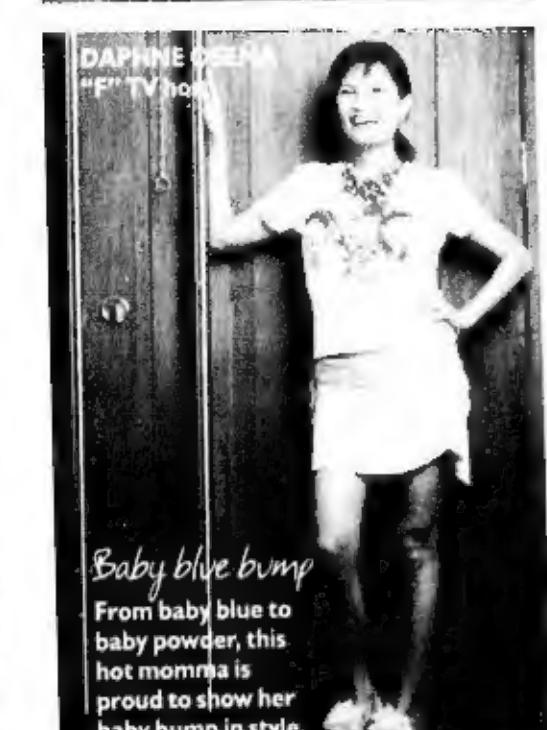
Jenni Epperson

IT'S A WARP-speed life these days, and we're all struggling to keep up with the pace. We're multitasking at work. Our mobile phones can do just about anything (I'm waiting for one that can do the dishes, or sort my closet!). And the more "all-in-one" the gadget or accessory, the better!

TO INFINITY/EZ



TINA TINIO
Unit brand manager,
Shu Uemura
and Kiehls



Baby blue bump
From baby blue to
baby powder, this
hot momma is
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baby bump in style.



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ROBINSONS PLACE MANILA • SM MEGAMALL, BLDG. B • THE PODIUM • THE POWER PLANT (ROCKWELL CENTER)
THE STORE (GRAND BOULEVARD HOTEL) • GATEWAY MALL, ARANETA CENTER

Splash dance

By Alex Y. Vergara

TWO YEARS AFTER COMING up with his first pair of made-to-order jeans, Victorino "Ino" Caluza still feels a bit queasy whenever people describe his creations as "couture."

Apart from its trademark leather trimmings on the back pockets, V-shaped belt loops and occasional hint of Swarovski beads, Caluza's jeans line under his very own Viktor (tel. 6880357) label is bereft of major embellishments. Of course, something as de rigueur as top-stitching doesn't count.

"People always associate couture with decorations," he says. "I'm more concerned with the fit. But if you consider made-to-order stuff couture, then my jeans probably are."

The former art director of an in-flight magazine may balk at putting too much trimmings on his jeans, but he's proud of the fact that not a few of his clients went home happy after slipping into the perfect-fitting pair.

Caluza's love affair with jeans and his search for the ideal but affordable pair led him to design his own. He even designed a suit made entirely of denim when doing so was unheard of in the Philippines.

"Friends started noticing what I was wearing and, before I knew it, I was already taking their orders," he says. "To cater to a growing clientele, I will be opening my first mall outlet on April 1 at the fourth level of the Podium."

At the end of the day, he adds, finding the right pair of jeans has nothing to do with its brand, price and, yes, embellishments. It has everything to do with fit. This explains why a growing number of clients are willing to brave the traffic and spend precious time fitting.

"It doesn't matter if a pair costs a mere P250," adds Caluza. "If the fit is perfect, chances are you're going to wear it more often than the more expensive but ill-fitting imported pair."

Figure flaws

In fact, Caluza seems to have learned by heart the typical Filipino's figure flaws. Not a few young women, for instance, have big hips and small waistlines. Most guys, on the other hand, have short legs, flat behinds and ample waistlines.

He advises women with big hips to invest in a good pair or two of flattering boot-cut jeans. But the short guy is better off sticking to straight legs, as the boot-cut silhouette can only make him look smaller.

"Men with less-than-ample behinds should look for the right low-rise jeans," Caluza adds.

Addressing a person's specific figure is just half of it. Before Caluza sits down and takes a client's measurements, he first conducts a so-called lifestyle assessment.

"I usually recommend a style of jeans based primarily on what a client does," he says. "It



THE JEAN pool

also helps to know if he or she is a day or night person. If the client loves to party, then he or she would need a more unique or striking pair."

Caluza may have limited his offerings to three design series—V (P3,700-P4,000 per pair), VP (P4,900) and the premium VX (P5,000-P5,500)—but each presents numerous "permutations" that are limited only by the user's imagination and chutzpah.

For starters, the designer has a wide range

of materials in various colors, washes, weights and grades at his disposal. After his first year in the business, he added cotton twill, canvas and even camouflage—as in military-inspired jigsaw print—to his extensive inventory of denim fabrics.

"Rambo" meets "Brokeback Mountain?" Couture jeans has never looked this radical.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

Ino Caluza's

jeans line under

his very own

Viktor label is

not 'couture,'

but it very well

may be

PHOTOGRAPHY
FRANK HOESMIT

MAKEUP LEO POSADAS

HAIR ALLAN ARNECILLA

DIVINE LEE,

VICTOR BASA, MERCATOR,

CARLO CONCEPCION,

VICTO RID

CLOTHES INO CALUZA

SHOT ON LOCATION

AT THE

WACK WACK POOL

DRENCHED down there



WET and wild



SOAKED to the skin

To infinity and beyond!

Green-minded jeans



From page E1

Even the realm of fashion has joined the fray. First, there was the infinity dress. Remember those infomercials? You sat in your PJs, devouring your favorite ice cream while hypnotized by the announcer's voice ("...and that's not all") as the model popped up in one version after the other (insert "ooh... ah!" here).

Then there was designer Rajo Laurel's infinity top that made waves among the stylish set. Made of jersey in nearly every color of the rainbow, it was photographed at practically every product launch.

And now, the infinity Wrap of Penshoppe.

Tie it or twist it, fold it or fasten it, drape it or dress it up. Sash it or wrap it around whichever part of your body that strikes your fancy.

This is the thrill of discovery, fashionista-style: the obsession of working a single piece of clothing into X + forever ways is not so much the result of a wardrobe drought. It's more about the fun of discovering what new style you can concoct. Then again, it could be lack of closet or suitcase space—which I very much doubt!

We asked six hardcore fashionistas to have their way with the infinity Wrap, and we're thrilled to our toes to report that these ladies came up with more than a week's worth of with-it looks on and off the beach.

For P349, you can come up, at the very least, with 12 ways to wear the Infinity Wrap. That's P29 per look! Talk about value for your vavavoom level.

So don't be afraid to experiment to your heart's content. Being stylish isn't about having mountains of clothes to choose from; it's about having infinite creativity with what you already have.

E-mail the author at ifashion@inquirer.com.ph



Zip in style
Dance to the bandana beat.

CAT JUAN
Co-founder
of Planet
zips.com,
beauty
writer

Brown beat
Exotic in halter-top style

Three way tie
Use three wraps
for one great style.

AMINA ARANAZ-ALUNAN
Aranaz bag designer, model

ASTRUD CRISOLOGO
Owner, Casa Amarilla

ANNE ARENAS-GONZALEZ
VP for marketing, Havaianas

DIVINE LEE

brag board

To beach-bound with summer sizzling treats made for style stars of the Boracay bunch

FASHION FLASH

Villainess lands lead role

SHE'S THE QUINTESSENTIAL *maldita* of contemporary Philippine cinema, the love-to-hate villainess of the silver screen. So it should be of little surprise that actress Cherie Gil has been chosen as the new face of the clothing and lifestyle brand *Maldita*.

Gil, of course, has always been lauded by the fashion press for her elegance and sartorial taste, and is always at the top of local entertainment's best-dressed lists.

But, naysayers may ask, isn't she a bit mature to be endorsing a label like *Maldita*?

"We never saw her age as a problem," stresses Eric Teng, owner of *Maldita*. "In fact, we never considered anyone else to endorse our brand... Cherie's an icon for all ages. She's very appealing. She's *kikay, kalog...*"

Like her immortal movie lines, the

fortysomething Gil is a classic beauty, adds Teng, and is in no way a "second-rate, trying hard copycat." The actress "gave her own inputs [for the promotional photo shoot]... She's very easy to work with."

Maldita, contrary to what some may think, says Teng, doesn't only cater to young women, but to women of all ages—women who have their own sense of drama, who aren't afraid to break away from social molds, who are the stars of their own show. Just like Gil.

"You see, age isn't really an issue anymore," notes Teng. "Look at the women of 'Sex and the City,' 'Desperate Housewives.' Cherie is just like your friend's sexy mom. She's cool, she's the jeans-wearing kind..."

As if to prove that *Maldita* is for women of all ages, the owner announces that the twentysomething designer Kate Torralba will launch her first ready-to-wear collection for the label next month.

As they say, *abangan...*

Chechie V. Moral



PHOTOGRAPH BY RAYmund ISAC

VINTAGE VIXEN. Loot luggage by Astrud Crisologo. Limited-edition luggage from Casa Amarilla. Get a chance to score these vintage bags at Rockwell Bazaar this March 18-19.



NATURALLY CHIC. This luggage from Aranz is far from your *lola's banig bag*, made from woven pandan straw and glamorized with mock snakeskin leather and beads. To order, visit their shops in Golf City and Rockwell.



WALK PROUD, WALK PINOY. The Philippines is the second largest importer of Havaianas in the world, and to celebrate their success, they marked these comfy flip-flops with our flag (P795).



Robinsons Supermarket

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March 13 - April 30, 2006

Every P300 single receipt purchase from the participating categories gives you a chance to WIN any of these Sizzling Summer Prizes.

Grand Prize: 5 El Nido packages (Group or family of 4)

2nd Prize: 62 Picnic Sets (2 winners / branch)

Plus! Enjoy great price cuts on your favorite summer products.

PHOTO MAY VARY FROM ACTUAL PRIZE.

Nestle ICE CREAM

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- Circle C Center, Congressional
- Malecon Citysquare
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See flyers for details.

Banliad Town Center, Cebu

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Good Earth Plaza, Avenida

Susano Complex, Novaliches

Berkeley Square, Commonwealth

Nagaland, Email, Naga City

Per DTI-NCP Permit No. 0434, Series of 2006

Double Midnight Madness SALE

UP TO 70% OFF

March 17 and 18: Up to 12 midnight
 March 19: Extended Sale during mall hours

Enjoy these Double Midnight Madness Special Offers:

★ Free PARKING TICKETS
 Free parking for four (4) hours for a minimum single receipt worth P1,000 dated March 17 & 18, 2006.

★ Free SPECIAL GIFTS
 Free Special Gift for a minimum single receipt purchase worth P1,000 dated March 17 & 18, 2006.
 The shopper will be asked to pick a prize from the bowl. First 1,000 lucky shoppers can win special gifts from Maybelline which can be redeemed at the Customer Service Booths located at Glorietta, Greenbelt 1 and Greenbelt 3. A shopper may only win once.

★ Free MOVIE TICKETS
 Buy 1 Take 1 cinema tickets on the last full show screening at Glorietta 1 & 4 on March 17 & 18, 2006
 (except for the movie "V for Vendetta").

★ Free GAMES
 Pay P160 for a load of P200 and get three (3) Yellow Swiper games for FREE
 on March 17 & 18, 2006 at Timezone. Valid at Glorietta 2 & 4 and Greenbelt 3.

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Happy ever
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